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**Aging Committee  
February 10, 2015  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Testimony**

**Proposed SB 290 - An Act Concerning Patient-Designated Caregivers -  
SUPPORT**

**Proposed HB 5455 - An Act Concerning Family Caregivers - SUPPORT**

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) supports the intent of both SB 290 and HB 5455 to enact the Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable (CARE) Act. These bills recognize the critical role family caregivers play in supporting their family members after a hospital discharge.

Over a half million people in Connecticut are caring for an aging parent or loved one, helping them to live independently in their own homes. Family caregivers perform a variety of caregiving duties, and now that people are living longer, the role of family caregivers has dramatically expanded to include performing more complex medical and nursing tasks with little to no training.

The CARE Act features three important provisions that support family caregivers keep their loved ones safe at home:

1. The name of the family caregiver is recorded when a loved one is admitted into a hospital;
2. The family caregiver is notified if the loved one is to be discharged to another facility or back home; and,
3. The facility must provide an explanation and live instruction of the medical tasks that the family caregiver will perform at home.

Cancer Patients often rely on caregivers to help them coordinate their care, manage their medications, provide transportation to outpatient treatment and help with activities of daily living. In particular, for older patients undergoing chemotherapy at home, patients and their designated caregivers need to understand the prescribed chemotherapy medications and any medications given to alleviate pain or nausea, as well as the signs and symptoms associated with adverse reactions.

The CARE Act's focus on involving patients and their designated caregivers in discharge planning and providing training for necessary after care tasks such as managing medication, is a crucial component that will help ensure that caregivers can help patients

receive the care they need at home. At the same time, it will also help provide caregivers themselves with more confidence and preparedness as they look after their loved ones.

The CARE Act has wide ranging support and similar legislation has recently been signed into law in Oklahoma and New Jersey. We urge Favorable Reports from this Committee.

*The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard.*

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