



Testimony to the Aging Committee

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut

February 10, 2015

Regarding

Senate Bill 204, An Act Concerning Best Practices for Protecting Senior Citizens from Interaction with Sexual Offenders

Good morning Senator Flexer, Representative Serra, and members of the Aging Committee. My name is Mag Morelli and I am the President of LeadingAge Connecticut, a membership organization representing mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of long term care, services and supports and including senior housing. On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut, I would like to testify on Senate Bill 204, *An Act Concerning Best Practices for Protecting Senior Citizens from Interaction with Sexual Offenders* and offer the Committee our assistance as you consider this issue.

Last year it was my privilege to serve on the Senior Safety Zone Task Force which was formed in accordance with Special Act 14-20. The task force was charged with studying issues similar to those addressed in the bill before you today and including the following:

- Best practices nationwide for protecting senior citizens in their homes, at senior centers and at long-term nursing facilities from interaction with sexual offenders;
- Legal considerations related to identifying persons convicted of sexual offenses and preventing them from entering public facilities where senior citizens may live or congregate;
- Data regarding the percentage of sexual offenders whose victims are elderly persons;
- The most effective means to identify sexual offenders and limit their movements without affecting their constitutional rights.

The task force met four times between October and December as we studied these issues. We invited experts to present at various task force meetings to speak on the areas under study including the areas of law enforcement, parole and probation, protective services for the elderly, dementia care, senior housing, and sexual assault crisis counseling. Members of the Task Force also presented information specific to their area of expertise.

The Task Force developed a report as mandated by the Special Act and included in that report are several recommendations that may be of interest to the Committee. One of those recommendations was to encourage best practices that are currently employed by various entities to protect older adults from sexual abuse. The report also suggests that these practices might be enhanced if there was additional information provided to law enforcement and the public through a modified sex offender registry as proposed in the bill. While LeadingAge Connecticut would not necessarily support

a legislative mandate of best practices, we would support exploring possible modification to the sex offender registry and encouraging the implementation of best practices as outlined in the report.

The following is a link to the full [Report of the Senior Safety Zone Task Force - Connecticut](#) which I hope the Committee will consider a resource on this and other issues regarding the safety and protection of older adults.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Mag Morelli, President



(203) 678-4477, mmorelli@leadingagect.org
110 Barnes Road, Wallingford, CT 06492 www.leadingagect.org

LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership organization representing mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of care including nursing homes, residential care homes, housing for the elderly, continuing care retirement communities, adult day centers, home care and assisted living agencies. By continuing a tradition of mission-driven, consumer-centered management and competent, hands-on care, not-for-profits set the standard in the continuum of housing, care and services for the most vulnerable aging adults.