



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

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Testimony on Proposed HB 5257 An Act Requiring Notice Of Nursing Home Resident Abuse.

Dear Chairmen Moore and Abercrombie, Ranking Members Markley and Wood, and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee:

First, thank you so much for adding Proposed HB 5257 to the Public Hearing agenda today.

This bill seeks to amend Section 17b-451 of the Connecticut General Statutes. This statute requires that those who are delineated in this section responsible for the care and protection of elderly persons must notify the Commissioner of Social Services, or the person or persons designated by the commissioner not later than seventy-two hours if there is abuse or suspicion of abuse of an elderly person in their care.

While HB 5257 focuses on notification by nursing home reporters to notify family members immediately upon abuse or the suspicion of abuse of elderly persons in their care, the bill could and should be amended to include all mandated reporters identified in Public Act 13-250.

Furthermore, the statute is silent on the notification of mandated reporters to family members of the abused elderly person or to the elderly person's advocate. Family members need to be notified immediately of any suspected abuse especially of physical abuse that is easily detected by the care givers.

In either case, seventy-two hour notification is too large a window of time for mandated reporters to report elderly abuse. This too lengthy prescribed reporting time by the mandated reporters in Section 17b-451 could potentially be dangerous to the abused or neglected elderly person. The prescribed time fails to protect the elderly from potential additional abuse by its delay. Additionally, immediate medical care to address the abuse is lost by such a prolonged delay.

My intent in HB 5257 is to require immediate notification to family members of abuse or suspected abuse in nursing homes and other settings by mandated reporters. This bill will protect the elderly to a greater degree. I would like to work with the Committee on this proposal and redraft.

With all of the technological resources at hand, there is no reason that nursing home administrators, or other mandated reporters, should postpone the reporting of abuse or suspected abuse to family members or to the elderly person's advocate.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 5257 and I am pleased to answer any questions that you may have for me.

Kathleen M. McCarty
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