March 4, 2014

Written testimony of Matthew V. Barrett, Executive Vice President of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities (CAHCF), Inc. concerning H.B. No. 6690 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MINIMUM NURSING FACILITY STAFFING LEVELS.

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and to the members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Matthew V. Barrett, Executive Vice President of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities (CAHCF), our state's one hundred and sixty (160) member trade association of skilled nursing facilities and rehabilitation centers. Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony this afternoon on H.B. No. 6690 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING NURSING FACILITY MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS.

This legislation reasonably provides that a nursing home facility must have sufficient nursing staff to maintain a daily minimum ratio of not less than two and three-tenths nursing staff hours per resident.

We agree that the Public Health Code (PHC) is outdated and overdue for an update on minimum staffing requirements. For example, the PHC now only requires a minimum of one and nine-tenths hours per patient for a skilled nursing facility.

H.B. 6690 is a reasonable and measured approach to increasing the staffing requirement. Moreover, the bill provides that if any nursing home facility experiences increased costs or expenditures complying with the provisions of this section, the Department of Social Services must provide Medicaid reimbursement associated with the new costs.

It is our belief that all Connecticut nursing facilities should at least be staffing at the levels prescribed in the bill. If there are facilities staffing below these levels, the bill will appropriately demand additional staffing. For these reasons, CAHCF supports the bill.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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