



Testimony to the Veterans' Affairs Committee

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut

February 17, 2015

Regarding

Senate Bill 522, An Act Concerning Prescription Drugs Administered by Nursing Homes to Veterans

LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership organization representing not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of long term care, services and supports and including not-for-profit nursing homes. We respectfully submit the following testimony regarding Senate Bill 522, *An Act Concerning Prescription Drugs Administered by Nursing Homes to Veterans*.

In 2010 the state passed a mandate (Public Act 10-39) to require that, "at the request of a patient, a nursing home facility shall dispense and administer prescription drugs obtained through a prescription drug program or health plan operated by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs regardless of the form of the drug's packaging."

While we are not certain as to the intent of Senate Bill 522, it appears to propose expanding this current mandate to drugs "obtained by a patient" through a VA program. This is concerning if the bill intends to require a nursing home to dispense medications that are brought in from the outside by a patient without verification as to the origin or validity of the contents of the packaging. If this is indeed the intent, we would need to discuss it further with the Department of Public Health as current federal guidance overseeing nursing homes states that, "*Transportation of medications from the dispensing pharmacy or vendor to the facility should be consistent with manufacturer's specifications, state and federal requirements, and standards of professional practice to prevent contamination, degradation, and diversion of medications.*"

LeadingAge Connecticut would welcome the opportunity to further discuss the details of this legislation and the intent of the proposal with the Committee and the Department of Public Health so as to ensure that we are providing our veterans and all residents of nursing homes with the high standard and quality of care that they deserve.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

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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.