



# SENIOR CARE<sup>®</sup>

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## OF MIDDLEBURY

February 27, 2015

### Testimony for SENIOR CARE ADULT DAY CARE

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Jean Kannan. I am the Administrator of the Senior Care Adult Day Care Center, in Middlebury.

Senior Care is proud to be among the high quality and cost efficient community care providers that are providing an alternative to nursing home care until or unless it's absolutely needed. Our centers provide a full continuum of care from providing 3 meals a day and personal hygiene to nursing care and recreation. We are open 7 days a week from 7 to 5 and provide the necessary resources for family members to keep their loved ones at home whether they are elderly, suffering from Alzheimer's or are just too clinically fragile to be left alone. Our centers are funded primarily through the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and the Connecticut Statewide Respite Care Program. We are concerned with the Governor's proposed cuts to services provided for the elderly and how those affected will be negatively impacted.

One area of concern is Governor Molloy's budget seeks to freeze the intake of individuals into the Category 1 program. Category 1 provides services for those elderly who are at risk of hospitalization or short term nursing placement, but not yet frail enough to be at risk for long term skilled nursing placement. Adult day services for these individuals allow them to maintain their independence at home. By attending adult day services, situations that may necessitate nursing home placement such as falls and malnutrition may be avoided or delayed. Many of our elderly would be left vulnerable if not allowed into this program.

The budget proposal also seeks to increase the cost sharing requirement for the state funded portion of the Connecticut Home Care Program. Currently the co-pay is 7%, which under the governor's proposal would increase to 15%, more than doubling what our elders already pay. The effect of this hike would be that our older individuals would drop out of or avoid day services, as happened in 2010 when a 15% co-pay was implemented. Again, this would lead our frail seniors into more costly nursing homes rather than maintaining their independence and living in their own homes.

The Governor's budget also proposes cutting the Alzheimer's Respite Program by \$544,917, which is approximately 25% of their current budget. This program provides funds to help families who are caring for a member with dementia. Caregivers desperately need a break from the constant physical and emotional stress of caring for someone with dementia. By having their

loved one attend adult day services, families know their loved one is safe, cared for and attending appropriate activities while giving the exhausted caregivers a break to find the strength to carry on. This program allows those with dementia to stay at home much longer, keeping families together. Without the Respite Care Program, more of those with dementia would end up in nursing homes sooner and at a much higher cost.

The elderly in Connecticut need services. Those with limited assets may simply not have the funds or be reluctant to spend their limited resources to provide for the care they need to continue to live in their own homes or with their families. With the Governor's proposed budget cuts our older citizens may not be able to get services they need, when they need them, ultimately ending up in skilled long term care earlier than they would like to be. After quickly spending down all their assets toward costly nursing home care, they will be eligible for Medicaid, which will cost the state much more in the long run.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

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