

Glastonbury Health Care Center

February 27, 2015

Written testimony of Elizabeth Schmeizl, Administrator, Glastonbury Health Care Center;
Concerning the Governor's Recommended FY 2016 and FY 2017 Proposed Budget

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and the members of the Appropriations Committee: My name is Elizabeth Schmeizl, Administrator at Glastonbury Health Care Center in Glastonbury, Connecticut. Glastonbury Health Care Center is a longstanding provider of nursing care in the community.

I want to begin by letting you know how proud I am to be the Administrator of GHCC. I am privileged to work with many caring, devoted people from RNs, LPNs, CNAs, dietary workers and housekeepers, who want what I want---to deliver the highest quality care experience to anyone who comes to Glastonbury Health Care Center. These workers are doing an amazing job, and I am so grateful to them, and proud of them for everything they are doing.

Providing great care has so many challenges. With these challenges, giving the level of care that everyone wants for their loved ones is getting harder and harder to provide. The reason it is getting so hard isn't difficult to understand---there has been almost no help in the budget for the past 8 years. The dollar allotment has remained flat, while almost all of our costs are continually rising. If the budget is passed as it is, it will be a decade of nearly flat funding for our nursing facility. The idea that our nursing facility could be cut this session because of our state's financial troubles is devastating and beyond my ability to understand how we will be able to deliver the quality of care we want to deliver. As the Administrator, I am not sure how I could implement any more cuts or how I would tell my employees or residents that we need to cut even more than our flat funding has required over the years.

Here are some examples of what we have been up against while the rates have been stagnant:

- Costs for electricity, food, natural gas, drugs and medical supplies have significantly risen over the past 8 years. My team and I manage our expenses efficiently, but it gets increasingly difficult year after year.

- At Glastonbury Health Care Center, the needs of our residents are also increasing. The acuity of our residents is much more complex as our population ages. The average age of our residents is 87. While there are more options for those who need less care to stay at home and receive service, the residents that come to Glastonbury Health Care Center need our services. Their needs are too complex for in home care. Many of our patients come to us straight from the Intensive Care Units.

Please help us continue to deliver the high quality of care that we want to deliver. Please give us the resources we need to do this.

Thank you.