

Testimony of Sonja Zandri, Brookside Rest Home, Danbury
concerning Residential Care Funding in
H.B. No. 6824 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM
ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2017, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR AND
OTHER PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE.

Department of Social Services Budget- February 27, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Flexer, Representative Abercrombie and Members of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Human Services, my name is Sonja Zandri and I am offering written testimony about residential care home rates and specifically our opposition to the continual flat funding of our rates.

Our Home has gone already for 4 years through a freeze. To cap it again is going to cause hardship. I have owned the Home for 40 years we had some bad times in CT but never this long. The state has not reimbursed us for actual costs. There are increasing demands that have cost us money, like minimum salaries, insurance, etc. Costs have gone up for the past 6 years. Those costs include Food, electric, fuel, health, car and liability insurance, property taxes, etc.

I have survived because my mortgage is paid. I owe money only to me. When we have too many bills I drop my salary. I will not stay in business like that for much longer.

We have great a staff that has not received an increase in 6 years. We had to stop their pension plan and reduce their health insurance. Some of my staff have been with me over 10 years. Some of them are the sole earners, since their husbands have lost their jobs and are only getting part time jobs.

We love what we do but we are seriously thinking about closing.

This would leave the Danbury area without a home. Forty years ago we had five homes. The state had 139 homes and now is down to 100.

I don't believe people realize how we care for these residents. Some of our residents have been with us over 30 years. We keep residents out of the hospital, nursing homes and of the streets. We care for the elderly, mentally ill, and handicapped.

We get a daily rate of \$73.72 or a monthly rate of only \$2242.32 and this is in Fairfield County.

We have an Adult Day Care Center in town that receives more money for 6 hours of care than we do for 24hr.

Our home is a family owned home my daughter now is the Administrator. She was 7 when we bought it and grew up with the residents being grandmothers and grandfathers. Many other residential care homes are the same but I am afraid that without support we will continue to see less and less such homes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sonja Zandri, owner of Brookside Rest Home
203-740-0488