



Beacon Brook
HEALTH CENTER

February 5, 2015

Written testimony of Linda Garcia, Administrator, Beacon Brook Health Center, Concerning

***Proposed H.B. No. 5586 AN ACT INCREASING NURSING FACILITY RATES.**
<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/TOB/H/2015HB-05586-R00-HB.htm>

***Proposed H.B. No. 5812 AN ACT CONCERNING A COST OF LIVING INCREASE FOR NURSING FACILITIES.** **<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/TOB/H/2015HB-05812-R00-HB.htm>**

***Proposed S.B. No. 231 AN ACT CONCERNING COST-OF-LIVING INCREASES FOR NURSING HOMES.** **<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/TOB/S/2015SB-00231-R00-SB.htm>**

Good evening Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and to the members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Linda Garcia. I am the Administrator at Beacon Brook Health Center in Naugatuck, Connecticut. Beacon Brook Health Center is a longstanding provider of nursing care in the community of Naugatuck with 126 skilled nursing beds, 222 employees, and the recent recipient of recognition from the American Health Care Association for safely reducing hospital readmissions and safely reducing the off label use of antipsychotics.

First I want to publicly thank the state legislators who introduced these badly needed bills---House Republican Leader Klarides, and Representatives Perillo and Gentile, and State Senator Crisco. And thank you also to the Human Services Committee for including these bills at this public hearing.

The bills all get to the same issue. Medicaid Nursing facility rates have been basically flat since 2007, but costs have been dramatically rising. The bills recognize that this pattern just can't work over time and provide for increasing rates, by an annual cost of living adjustment or through a formula that increases rates based on the nursing facilities costs.

The message from the operator's point of view is simple----Our nursing facilities need your help. We just can't continue on a path where no help is provided without strapping our employees and jeopardizing quality.

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

- Increase patient acuity. Individuals who are relatively healthy are going directly home from the hospital. People who are very compromised with multiple comorbidities are requiring skilled nursing care.
- Our long term care residents are aging in place and requiring much more care. The average age in my facility is 82 with five people over 100 years old.
- Medications for Medicare A residents are much more costly. Under our reimbursement, Medicare A resident's medications are covered in our inclusive rate.
- Costs for electricity, food, natural gas, encryption software and criminal background checks have significantly increased.
- We are experiencing a greater challenge in collecting applied income from residents to pay for their care. This is due to the overall economy in Connecticut and the increasing shared dependence of families on an elderly person's social security and pension.

I am asking you to advance these bills and provide our nursing facilities the help they need to care for our residents.

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