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My name is Charles Lunenfeld and I am a 51 year old former patient at Smith House Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Stamford, CT. I would like to testify on behalf of Next Health in support of CT Senate Bill 175.

I have had severe Guillian Barre Syndrome for two years. I was completely paralyzed, on a respirator for seven months and was transferred to Smith House after I came off the vent. A mechanical lift was used to move me to and from bed and it was extremely painful for my legs and hips. I had pain and numbness everywhere and the lift would pull up my legs and would cause my hips such pain that it would just about bring me to tears. That all changed once I started using the Agile Life in July, 2013. Because of its nice smooth transfer I was able to regularly attend physical and occupational therapy 5-6 days a week. Eventually I begin moving my hands and arms and about 11 months later I started taking my first steps walking with the parallel bar. At that point, my goal was to be able to go home in six months. With my ability to attend physical therapy more often due to the Agile Life I was able to go reach my goal and return home in January of this year.

The AgileLife allowed me to become more independent and really helped my quality of life. Besides eliminating the process of having to be moved by multiple care givers and a mechanical lift, it also has a boosting feature. This enabled one caregiver to reposition me with the touch of a button. I was able to reposition myself once I had feeling back in my hands, whenever needed, without having to call a nurse. I used the other bed functions too. I had to adjust my legs often because of the pain and cramps, so I was constantly repositioning myself. It also comes with a commode option for the wheelchair. Having this available made me feel like more of a human being and a healthy adult rather than a sick adult or a kid in a diaper.

The Agile Life was a game changer for me and I can't say enough about it. I have not had any falls, pressure ulcers or infections and it was easy to travel to appointments from Smith House, including to advanced rehabilitation my last few months at Smith House. I believe that many individuals in similar situations can greatly benefit both physically and emotionally from using the Agile Life. Not only did it allow me to get out of bed without inflicting more pain in order to attend therapy, it allowed me to go through the entire process with some dignity.

I recommend the Agile Life to anyone who needs transfer assistance. I was fortunate to get the Agile Life due to extended family support and assistance from Next Health. However, I know that insurance does not currently cover it which makes it difficult for others who might need it. I believe insurance should cover this product as it promotes patient healing, independence and dignity, prevents injuries for both patients and caregivers and reduces the need for extra staff to re-position and transfer in settings that are already short-staffed to begin with.

Thank you.