



## QUESTIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT ON AGING COMMISSIONER NOMINEE

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### DEPARTMENT ON AGING ([CGS § 17A-317](#))

The Department on Aging is responsible for all functions, powers, and duties of the Department of Social Services' (DSS) former Aging Services Division. This includes, among other things, administering federal Older Americans Act programs, elderly nutrition programs, health insurance counseling, and state grants for elderly services and programs.

The commissioner is responsible for the overall operation and administration of the department; establishing and developing programs and administering services to achieve the department's purposes; advocating for necessary additional elderly programs; assisting and advising government agencies; planning elderly programs and services; coordinating public and private elderly outreach activities; and consulting and cooperating with area and private planning agencies.

### QUESTIONS

1. Please describe the mission of the Aging Department as you see it. As commissioner, how will you ensure that the department meets this mission? What particular experience, expertise, and other assets do you bring to the Aging Department?
2. Do you believe that the department has the adequate resources, in terms of both personnel and budget, to meet its obligations under the law? How have the governor's budget recissions affected and how will the governor's proposed budget affect the agency?

3. The Aging Department is primarily responsible for administering federal Older Americans Act programs and housing the state's Long-Term Care Ombudsman program. But, DSS still administers the state's elderly Medicaid-related programs, including the Money Follows the Person demonstration program and the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders. Do you anticipate any challenges with having the state's elderly programs administered by two different departments? How will you work with DSS to alleviate potential conflicts between the agencies or difficulties coordinating services for the elderly?
4. Other than funding issues, what do you consider to be the greatest challenges to increasing access to elderly programs and services?
5. Which elderly programs have been the most effective and why? What are your ideas for improving current programs or creating new ones?
6. There have been increasing efforts by states, including Connecticut, to "rebalance" their long-term care systems, in order to reduce the number of people in institutions and increase the number served by home- and community-based services. Do you think Connecticut's policy changes have been successful? What strategies, initiatives, or programs would you like the state to pursue in this area?
7. For the past few years, the legislature has considered legislation that would create "senior safety zones" that prohibit registered sex offenders from entering areas where seniors congregate, such as senior centers or elderly housing units. The town of Montville also created, and later rescinded, a similar ordinance after opponents expressed concerns with its constitutionality and enforceability. Do you have any thoughts about the issue? What is the most effective way to protect seniors without affecting sex offenders' constitutional rights?
8. The legislature's Senior Safety Zone Task Force recently issued its final recommendations to help protect seniors from interaction with sex offenders. Recommendations included, among other things, encouraging elderly housing sites and senior centers to implement safety plans and exploring modifying the state's sex offender registry to include a tiered system. Do you have any thoughts, ideas, or comments about these recommendations?
9. Connecticut is facing an aging population coupled with an increasing desire among seniors to remain in their own homes and communities as they age. As a result, the number of family caregivers will likely continue increasing over time. According to the Commission on Aging, the state currently has over 500,000 unpaid family caregivers who assist elderly loved ones with daily living activities. What can the state do to support these caregivers?

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