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Public Hearing
Aging Committee
AGING COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 5283
February 25, 2016

Good afternoon Senator Flexor, Representative Serra and members of the Aging Committee. My name is Melissa Marshall. I live in West Hartford and I'm here today in my capacity as Coordinator of the Connecticut Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance, a coalition representing people from all disability groups. I'm here today to urge you to support H.B. AN ACT RESTORING STATE ASSISTANCE FOR MEDICARE PART D BENEFICIARIES.

State assistance for dually eligible Medicare Part D beneficiaries for prescription drug copayments in excess of fifteen dollars per month is vital. Many elderly people and people with disabilities are prescribed medications that are so numerous their co-pay easily exceeds \$15 per month. There is no cap on the co-pay. People are being forced to choose taking prescribed medication and food.

The results of people taking a partial dose of medication or skipping it entirely can be disastrous for the individual as well as for the state. The cost of just a few people, because they could not afford medication for a psychiatric disability; diabetes; or high blood pressure, being hospitalized or even needing surgery, far exceeds the costs saved requiring elderly individuals and persons with disabilities to pay for co-pays exceeding \$15 per month.

This is particularly fiscally unwise when it has been estimated that the entire savings of the program would be \$80,000. in the first fiscal year and \$90,000. during the second.

We recognize the need for the state to conserve funds, but requiring elderly people and people with disabilities to make these payments is extremely detrimental to their health as well as the fiscal health of the state. We urge you to favorably consider this bill.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of this matter.



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