



– Growing Older Together –

55 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
Telephone: (860) 424-5274
Toll Free: 1-866-218-6631
Website: www.ct.gov/aging
Email: aging.sda@ct.gov

Written Testimony

Aging Committee

March 3, 2016

Elizabeth B. Ritter, State Department on Aging

Senator Flexer, Representative Serra, Senator Kelly, Representative Bolinsky and distinguished members of the Aging Committee. My name is Betsy Ritter. I am the Commissioner of the State Department on Aging. I am here today to provide testimony in support of HB 5379: AN ACT CONCERNING REMOVAL OF OBSOLETE PROVISIONS FROM THE CHOICES HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM STATUTE.

This bill proposes to amend the current CHOICES statute (Connecticut's program for Health Insurance Assistance, Outreach, Information and Referral, Counseling and Eligibility Screening) by eliminating sections that have become obsolete and are no longer applicable to the CHOICES program. These particular sections were put in place when there were a great number of Medicare Managed Care Plans, many of which no longer exist and have been replaced with Medicare Advantage plans. The Federal government currently provides oversight of these Medicare Managed Care plans.

The current statute states that the Commissioner of Insurance may require each Medicare organization to annually file reports with beneficiary plan data and other specified information. A Medicare organization can be fined for failure to file these annual reports. However, the Department of Insurance does not require Medicare organizations to file reports. Consequently no fines are imposed and no reports regarding the lack of fillings by Medicare organizations are provided to the General Assembly by the Healthcare Advocate.

For these reasons, the State Department on Aging is proposing elimination of subsections (a) (3), (e), (f), and (g) from Section 17a-314 of the General Statutes.

I thank the committee for raising this bill on our agency's behalf. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

