



# Connecticut

Aging Committee

February 25, 2016

Testimony in Support of Raised Senate Bill #164

## **AAC MEDICAID COVERAGE OF TELEMONITORING SERVICES**

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On behalf of AARP Connecticut and approximately 600,000 members in the state, AARP is pleased to testify in support of Raised Bill 164. If passed, this bill will provide Medicaid coverage for home tele-monitoring services.

The broad scope of tele-medicine presents a vehicle to help achieve the triple aim of better health care, improved health outcomes and lower costs. It is widely acknowledged for its potential to ameliorate health care workforce issues by creating efficiencies and extending the reach of existing providers. With the potential to overcome access and other barriers, tele-medicine is also viewed as a means to reduce health disparities for aging and underserved populations, as well as reduce costs and burdens for patients.

Extending Medicaid coverage for home tele-monitoring services will allow home health agencies to share vital data related to a person's health with the patient's treating physician. But in addition, AARP believes that home tele-monitoring and other tele-medicine services holds the promise of helping not only patients but also their family caregivers access health care and long term services and supports in new ways. AARP supports the kinds of initiatives, as Raised Bill 164 presents, that will help keep individuals living independently in their homes and communities and to make it easier for working family caregivers to care for their loved ones.

In Connecticut there are approximately 459,000 family caregivers providing \$5.9 billion in unpaid care for their loved ones. Family caregiving is an issue that affects just about every one of us. By making it easier for home health agencies to share data with physicians, we would hope that this important health data could also be shared with a patient's family caregiver, because in many instances, family caregivers are also providing a significant level of care.

Raised Bill 164 is an important step for Connecticut's consumers. Furthering the use of home tele-monitoring could also help make it easier for patients and family caregivers to access the information and instruction they need to perform medical and nursing tasks they are being called upon to provide--especially when their loved ones are discharged from the hospital.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on Raised Bill #164, and we urge support.