



**Testimony of Glenn Appel
Director, Luther Ridge of Middletown**

**Appropriation Committee Public Hearing for HB-05044
Assisted Living Demo Project and Elderly Congregate Subsidy Program Funding
February 10, 2016**

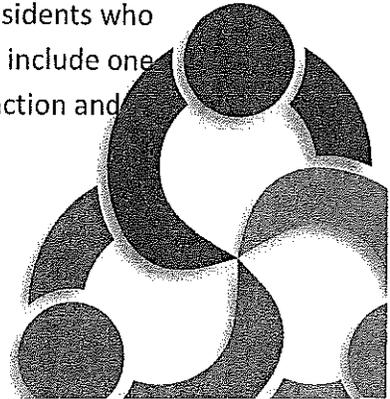
Good afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Walker, members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Glenn Appel and I am the Director of Luther Ridge, a senior living community for moderate and low income seniors in Middletown. I appreciate the opportunity to appear here today and advocate on behalf of those elderly residents who depend on the Assisted Living Demo Project and Congregate Housing Programs offered at Luther Ridge. I am here to testify about my concerns regarding potential State funding cuts to these important programs.

I understand the Governor's budgetary mandate and can certainly appreciate the difficult choices facing this committee. However, as you work through your choices, please consider how these programs we offer help mitigate even greater costs to the State by providing eligible Connecticut residents the housing and supportive services they need to remain in a far more supportive, cost-effective environment than premature placement in a nursing facility.

The Assisted Living Demo Program at Luther Ridge was developed as one of the four State Assisted Living Demonstration Pilots with the goal of saving State Medicaid funds being spent on long term care facilities. Our program offers affordable housing complete with necessary assisted living services to a senior population that simply could not afford these services otherwise. The average age of our residents in this program is 87 years old with an average annual income of \$23,600. We provide these seniors three meals a day, an onsite wellness center, a social worker to help the resident navigate support services, social opportunities, security, transportation, housekeeping as well as assistance with bathing, dressing and medication management.

The Congregate Housing For The Elderly program at Luther Ridge meets the needs of a segment of the elderly who because of increasing age and other functional limitations are not able to perform all personal and household functions associated with complete independent living. Our community features 45 of these apartments which are currently occupied by residents who average 80 years of age with an annual income of \$22,240. Services we provide include one main meal a day, housekeeping, 24-hour staffing and a full array of social interaction and support opportunities.



I believe both of these programs play a critical, cost-effective role in the State's continuum of care for seniors. They provide a solution to a very difficult situation: An aging person of limited means in need of care, often with limited family support, and who cannot afford private pay assisted living options. By continuing to provide these programs at Luther Ridge, the State at the very least postpones and many times eliminates the need to fund higher cost long-term nursing home care for this population.

In closing, I ask that during your budget deliberations this committee recognize the value to the individual, the community, and net benefit to the state budget these programs provide.

Thank You

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