



Testimony to the Appropriations Committee

Regarding Affordable Senior Housing with Long Term Services and Supports

HB 5044, An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017

Presented by Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut

February 10, 2016

LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership association representing over 130 not-for-profit organizations serving older adults. Our membership includes providers of affordable senior housing and our housing members are committed to providing quality housing, services and supports to their residents.

LeadingAge Connecticut commends the Governor's longstanding commitment to affordable housing, however we must testify this evening regarding our concerns with the current budget adjustment proposals related to affordable senior housing. Specifically, we are concerned that the proposed consolidation of agency operating funds within the Department of Housing will be detrimental to our state's successful models of affordable senior housing plus services.

LeadingAge Connecticut is a strong proponent of the model of linking affordable senior housing with long term services and supports; a model that enables older adults to remain in the community where they can thrive as they age. We believe that this model is one of the answers to our state's quest to balance the system of long term services and supports because it can provide an array of services to seniors residing in an affordable housing community while also often preventing or delaying nursing home placement.

We are proud of the fact that Connecticut has developed several nationally acclaimed models of senior housing plus services. These models include allowing assisted living services that are funded through the CT Home Care Program to be delivered to residents within our state congregate and HUD 202 housing sites, and within the four pilot affordable assisted living demonstration sites. We have excellent models of providing affordable senior housing plus services in this state and we have been advocating for more units to meet the growing needs of our elderly population.

Unfortunately we see a threat to these housing sites in the Governor's proposed consolidation of agency operating funds within the Department of Housing. The Governor's proposal would move the funding for *Subsidized Assisted Living Demonstrations, Congregate Facilities Operations Costs, and Elderly Congregate Rent Subsidies* into the Department's consolidated fund and this new consolidated fund would then be cut by 5.75%. While not a certainty, the cut would threaten the funding for these housing sites and thus threaten this successful model of providing affordable housing plus services to aging adults. We believe we should be investing in this model, not cutting it.

The investment in the model of linking affordable senior housing with long term services and supports is twofold. First, it requires the development of additional affordable housing sites with rental subsidies. The current waiting lists to move into such housing can be years long and therefore more units are desperately needed. Second, it requires an investment in the state funded and Medicaid waiver programs that provide the home care and assisted living services for the residents. These home care program services are funded through the Department of Social Services.

LeadingAge Connecticut strongly encourages the state not to cut, but rather to invest in the development of additional affordable senior housing sites, including congregate housing sites, where services can be delivered so that we can meet the growing demand.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Additional Resources on the Concept of Senior Housing Plus Services

Housing Plus Services Profiles and Case Studies

Published On: Dec 27, 2012

- **The Marvin, Norwalk, CT**
The Marvin is a 50-unit senior housing property financed through the low-income housing tax credit program. [Read more](#)
- **Tower One/Tower East, New Haven, CT**
Tower One and Tower East (the Towers) are adjoining Section 202 and Section 8 buildings with a total of 386 units. [Read more.](#)

Senior Housing Plus Services: What's the Value?

Published On: Nov 20, 2015 at LeadingAge.org

This multi-faceted research project explored whether affordable senior housing can serve as an effective platform for helping to address the health and long-term care needs of low-income older residents. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supported the study, which was conducted in partnership with The Lewin Group.

Project components include:

- **Assessing the Association between Onsite Services and Resident Health Care Utilization and Spending**
This multivariate analysis compared patterns of health care use and spending among residents of HUD-assisted senior housing properties offering onsite services and residents living in HUD-assisted senior housing properties without onsite services. A key study finding: the presence of a service coordinator significantly decreased residents' odds of having a hospital stay. [Read more at LeadingAge.org.](#)
- **Service Availability in HUD-Assisted Senior Housing**
This survey explored the types and frequency of onsite services that HUD-assisted senior housing properties made available to residents in 2008, how those services were delivered and funded, the presence of service staff, and how resident needs were assessed. [Read more.](#)
- **Interviews with State Policymakers about the Potential Role of Affordable Senior Housing Plus Services Strategies**
State officials provide their thoughts about how affordable senior housing can support the reform of health and long-term care. Officials also describe their efforts to link senior housing with health and supportive services. The interviews suggest that more work is needed to ensure that current residents of affordable senior housing can benefit from linking their housing properties with services and supports. [Read more.](#)

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