



Testimony of Nora Duncan, AARP State Director on Raised S.B. 88, *An Act Concerning Temporary Health Care Structures* before the Planning and Development Committee

Dear Members of the Planning and Development Committee,

AARP is pleased to offer our support for the concept outlined in Raised Senate Bill No. 88, AN ACT CONCERNING TEMPORARY HEALTH CARE STRUCTURES, which would offer a creative solution for independent living and help support family caregivers.

AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization with an age 50+ membership of nearly 38 million nationwide, and approximately 600,000 here in Connecticut. AARP fights for issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, family caregiving and independent living.

Over the past several years, AARP has raised its attention and its ever increasing commitment to support family caregivers. And by family caregivers I mean — spouses, partners, relatives, even friends or neighbors, people who have a significant relationship with and provide unpaid care for a loved one.

AARP's Public Policy Institute estimates that, at any time during the year, there are 711,000 family caregivers in Connecticut providing 465,000 million hours of care for an aging parent or loved one, helping them to live independently in their own homes. The care that these family caregivers provide in Connecticut amounts to an estimated \$5.8 billion per year. These family caregivers carry a huge responsibility.

Raised Senate Bill 88 would expand options for seniors to live in the community by allowing health care structures to be located on the property of a family caregiver, who can provide informal support and assistance. The concept is innovative and recognizes the strong preference seniors have to live in their own home and community as long as possible. The health care structures have the added benefit of not just providing proximity to family caregiver support and assistance, but also a degree of privacy, independence, and autonomy for the individual needing care.

AARP supports increased options for meaningful consumer choice. This approach presumes that consumers can assess most of their own needs and determine how best to meet those needs. If enacted, Raised S.B. 88 would provide another way to support an individual's choice to receive care in the community with the help of a family caregiver or other loved one. We look forward to working with Committee members to further develop this approach.