

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing
2/19/16 RE: 5044
Testimony Regarding the Governor's Budget Recommendation for
Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging
Susan Lather, Director of Enfield Senior Center

As the Director of the Enfield Senior Center and an advocate for older adults, I turn to Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging for non-partisan, factual information, the latest research and leadership on aging issues.

The Commission on Aging has provided information to the Enfield Commission on Aging, allowing the resident Commission members to formulate their direction based on current data and State initiatives. Julia Evans Starr has met several times with the local Commission to share demographic data and long-term care initiatives and explain the Money Follows the Person program. With that information, this municipal organization can use the trends and data to formulate a plan to better serve the community.

The first-ever Livable Communities informational forum, hosted by Connecticut's Commission on Aging with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities back in 2013, brought municipalities, State agencies and non-profits together to begin the conversation of how we can work together to address needs. From this forum, the Enfield Commission on Aging began plans to start its own Livable Communities discussion, inviting Town officials, Town staff, agencies serving older adults, the Housing Authority and faith communities. Since then, pursuant to Section 17b-420 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commission on Aging now leads a statewide livability communities initiative to shape communities that support Connecticut residents across the entire lifespan. The Commission continues to provide ongoing consultative support to the Enfield Commission on Aging's livability effort across wide-ranging areas, including planning and zoning, housing, and transportation.

I rely on the objective information provided by the Commission's participation in panel discussions at seminars and forums, through social media, and e-mails. The Commission on Aging can be counted on to synthesize information on current legislation that may impact older adults. These are complex issues that need non-partisan analysis.

Connecticut's aging population is increasing dramatically. As the Director of the Enfield Senior Center, I provide direct services to community older adults. I rely on the Commission on Aging for research and public policy information. There is no other agency that can provide the objectivity, leadership and knowledge that I have come to rely on from Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging. Thank you in advance for your continued support of their work.