

CW Resources, Inc.
Testimony regarding HB 7072
To the Committee on Aging

My name is Steve Sutcliffe, I am the Director of Food Services at CW Resources, Inc. and a member of CANASP. CW Resources is an Elderly Nutrition Provider for the Greater New Britain, Danbury and Bridgeport regions of Connecticut. We are also a provider of State Home Care meals in many regions of the state. We provide both Congregate and Home Delivered Meals. As an aside CW employs 109 persons with disabilities along with regular staff to assist in the creation and delivery of these meals.

I am encouraging and thanking you for your support of HB 7072 and other bills like it. The Connecticut State Home Care Program has been grossly underfunded for the last eight years or more with cost of living increases totaling about 3%. The hardship that this has created for Connecticut non-profit providers is very real. Due to the incredible efforts of the providers to stay afloat and provide services to meals participants, much of this hardship has flown under the radar. This is no longer the case.

A number of providers have dropped the SHC program and others are poised to follow. Simply put, the SHC program is not sustainable in its current state. Meal availability and quality have suffered while an increase in mandates and reporting requirements have been placed under our collective umbrellas.

Important as meals are to the senior community, the personal contact and physical wellness check of our seniors go hand in hand with the nutritional piece. In many cases the driver is the only person that the senior participant may see that day. The driver gets to know the senior and will notice any changes in the participant's behavior that may signal the need for both medical and/or psychological attention as well. This critical function disappears when a CT provider can no longer afford to provide service and at times is replaced with an out of state entity that drop ships a weeks' worth of meals at a time by a UPS/FEDEX driver. No wellness check is performed and the quality of these meals is questionable at best. If there is no answer at the door the meals are left unsupervised at the doorstep. The tampering and temperature concerns that this causes are dangerous and unacceptable.

Lastly, the cost to increase funding to make provider's whole, which will allow seniors to stay in their home, is a drop in the bucket when compared to the cost of premature admittance into a nursing home. Proper funding for meals on wheels is a win-win for the state. Please don't let this opportunity pass us by.

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