



February 28, 2019

The Honorable Senator Marilyn Moore and Representative Catherine Abercrombie
Co-Chairs, Human Services Committee
300 Capitol Ave, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, and Members of the Human Services Committee,

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut and the more than 36,000 individuals living with epilepsy in Connecticut, we urge you to **SUPPORT House Bill 7166, “AN ACT CONCERNING NONEMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION FOR MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES.”**

The Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut (EFCT), located in Middletown, leads the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures and save lives. We foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through educational activities, advocacy, recreational and direct services throughout Connecticut. Epilepsy is a medical condition that produces seizures affecting a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime.

The issue of Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is particularly important to the epilepsy community because nearly one-third of the epilepsy population is covered under the Medicaid program.¹ It is imperative that epilepsy patients, who very often can't drive due to their uncontrolled seizures, have access to NEMT to ensure they make their appointments in a timely manner. If an individual with epilepsy misses an appointment due to the negligence of the transportation vendor, serious health risks can result. Maintaining seizure control with minimal side effects requires careful evaluation and monitoring by physicians and their patients. To change, limit, or deny access to medications as a result of missing an appointment could be extremely dangerous.

This legislation would ensure that all Medicaid beneficiaries that are eligible for NEMT, including those with epilepsy, receive this critically important transportation service. We are also pleased to see that this legislation addresses the unnecessary wait times that many NEMT beneficiaries encounter on a daily basis. In terms of legal recourse, this legislation also creates a vital pathway towards civil injunctive relief from the Superior Court.

¹ “Medicaid”, *Epilepsy Advocacy*, Epilepsy Foundation of America, February 27, 2019.
<http://advocacy.epilepsy.com/Medicaid>

The Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut urges you to support H.B. 7166 and to continue to champion policies that improve access to vital programs like NEMT for all vulnerable populations including those with epilepsy. Please do not hesitate to contact Michael Finley, CT Government Relations, at 860-346-1924 or Michael@Epilepsyct.com with any questions or concerns.