



City of New London

Office of the Mayor

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February 28, 2019

Good morning, Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Logan, Representative Case and members of the Human Services committee,

My name is Jeanne Milstein. I am the Director of Human Services for the City of New London. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. No. 7166 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING NONEMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION FOR MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES.

In addition to many other responsibilities, I oversee the New London Senior Center. I also Co-chair the Opioid Action Team. I am here today to share with you the substantial problems we have encountered with Veyo. Last year the Health Improvement Collaborative of Southeastern Connecticut created a data entry portal for local providers to enter reports of what their patients and clients are experiencing, both positive and negative. In addition, we help seniors arrange transportation to medical appointment. New London is also the number 1 distressed municipality in the State. Our local 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment found that 42% in the Greater New London area making less than \$15,000 a year stayed home when they needed to go someplace in the previous 12 months and that 20% of that population reported never or almost never having access to a car.

Significant numbers of people reported problems getting to appointments. Between June and November, there were 51 incidents entered in our survey tool. This is not a representative sample or a systemic way of collecting the data, but it does give insight. It is generally dependent on individual case manager shaving the time to answer survey questions.

Of the 51 incidents-

72% reported that the cab did not come at all

24% reported that the cab was late-reported between 45 minutes and 3.5 hours late

48% of these incidents resulted in people missing medical appointment

I have also attached comments that people entered.

At our Senior Center, just last week, the Veyo provider showed up 3 hours late to pick her up for one of her appointments, and another time they didn't pick her up from the doctors' office, so she stayed there until after the office closed, and ended up calling a cab to bring her home. Another example...a driver denied a ride for illogical reasons, telling the person to take a bus. Countless numbers have examples of VEYO not showing up. I co-chair the Opioid Action Team. Many folks in our community are receiving medically based treatment for an opioid substance use disorder. For the person who does not have access to their medication for opioid use disorder can be a matter of life and death. For the patient recovering from a stroke who missed a neurology appointment, a senior dependent on dialysis, a child living with asthma who needs a adjust to their medical-their lives may depend on transportation.

Veyo did attend a Collaborative meeting last summer and are grateful for their time and efforts. However, we were disappointed that they were not able to provide us with insight and understanding about their methods for tracking service as the overwhelming experience of our partner members has been that the improvements and reliability report by Veyo conflicts with daily reports from our residents. The call center staff has been unable to provide accurate information regarding complaint procedures.

I highly recommend the following to help address the systemic and ongoing problems:

- 1) Direct DSS to invoke any and all remedies for non-compliance under the contract
- 2) Direct DSS to provide meaningful oversight of Veyo
- 3) Conduct a perform audit as recommended by the Council on Medicaid Assistance Program Oversight (MAPOC)

Thank you for your time and consideration.