



Testimony to the Human Services Committee

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President

March 19, 2019

In Support of

House Bill 7338, An Act Increasing Funding for Elderly Nutrition, Ensuring Equitable Rates for Providers of Meals on Wheels and Collecting Data on Malnutrition

LeadingAge Connecticut is a statewide membership association representing not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of aging services. On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut I am pleased to submit the following testimony in support of *House Bill 7338, An Act Increasing Funding for Elderly Nutrition, Ensuring Equitable Rates for Providers of Meals on Wheels, and Collecting Data on Malnutrition*.

LeadingAge Connecticut supports this bill which acknowledges the need to provide an annual increase the fee schedule rates for meals on wheels deliveries provided through the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE). A high value should be placed on this program which not only provides crucial daily nutritional meals, but also ensures a daily visit and eyes on contact with the elderly recipients receiving those meals in their homes. This program provides social contact, supports family caregivers and helps older adults maintain dignity in their homes and communities.

Meals are just one of the many valuable services that are offered through the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and all of these services are undervalued by the current fee schedule. We support an annual increase to the entire fee schedule for this crucial home and community-based provider network.

We would also encourage the Committee to revisit the statutory requirement passed in 2014 (PA 14-217) that mandated "an analysis of the cost of providing the services covered under the Connecticut home care program for elders which would include a determination of the rates necessary to reimburse providers of such cost." This information was requested of the Department of Social Services so as to allow for an informed analysis of the current fee schedule and to permit adequate planning for future reimbursement levels. The resulting report that was submitted to the General Assembly in 2015 was woefully inadequate and did not meet the intent of the law. We would therefore respectfully request that the Committee consider requesting of DSS that they provide the data and analysis required by that statute.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on this bill.

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