defeat malnutrition today

March 18, 2019

Senator Marilyn V. Moore, Co-Chair
Rep. Catherine F. Abercrombie, Co-Chair
Human Services Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2000
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Senator Moore and Rep. Abercrombie:

The national Defeat Malnutrition Today coalition is strongly supportive of HB 7338 to increase funding for elderly nutrition, ensure equitable rates for providers of meals and collect and analyze data on malnutrition.

We commend the inclusion of the language related to the collection and analysis of data on patient malnutrition for the purposes of improving quality of care. We know that malnutrition, especially among older adults, is a critical and growing health issue. Data we included in our National Blueprint includes the fact that up to one out of two older adults is either at risk of becoming or is malnourished. It leads to a four to six day increase in hospital stays, and overall hospital costs can be up to 300 percent greater for individuals who are malnourished.

Recently, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar discussed malnutrition, citing HHS data which found that Americans with malnutrition are twice as costly to treat at the hospital than those who come in well-nourished. He also estimated that malnutrition is responsible for some $42 billion each year in healthcare spending.

HB 7338 takes an important first step for the state of Connecticut with this language for data collection and analysis on patient malnutrition. Better data can help your state determine where resources may be needed. Better data collection with proper analysis can help advance a greater focus on prevention. Finally, as your bill notes, data collection and analysis is for the purpose of improving quality of care. That should be universally supported.

We are pleased as a national coalition with members from Connecticut to lend our full support to HB 7338.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Blancato
National Coordinator
Defeat Malnutrition Today

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