Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Logan, Representative Case and members of the Human Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of multiple bills this year that will address significant problems impacting elderly individuals and the people who care for them and watch out their best interests.

Specifically, I would like to offer testimony in support of Senate Bills 818, 819, and 822 and ask the committee consider the importance of adopting this legislation.

**SB 818 AN ACT ALLOWING FOR THE DEDUCTION OF COURTAPPROVED CONSERVATOR AND FIDUCIARY EXPENSES FROM MEDICAID APPLIED INCOME.**

This bill is a common sense proposal to improve services for the elderly and better manage probate court expenses. It will improve human services in the probate court system, leverage federal dollars and increase revenue to the state’s General Fund by $600,000 annually.

Here’s how it works. As you are aware, the applied income calculation that is done when someone is eligible for Medicaid involves all a person’s income minus $60 for personal needs and minus the amount of their Medicare premium. The balance is then considered applied income. This bill proposes including court appointed attorneys in this formula, and therefore would allow Medicaid applicants and recipients to deduct compensation of a conservator and probate court expenses from the calculation of their applied income. By allowing for this deduction, and therefore allowing for the payment of these probate court fees out of applied income, the state will be reducing costs for probate courts and state taxpayers and increasing the availability of these services received by elderly individuals in need. This change will create a system that encourages more attorneys to take these cases, and therefore result in more people helping seniors and persons in need in the probate court system. Thanks to the leveraging of federal dollars, it will result in a $600,000 increase in funds received by the state.

I would like to address some criticism this proposal received last year, in which concerns were raised about a $125,000 cost for a computer update needed in order to allow this new proposed system to work. Clearly, a one-time cost of $125,000 is more than made up for with a $600,000 increase in revenue to the state annually. This is a common sense way to leverage federal dollars and improve the probate court system for all involved.

**SB 819 AN ACT PROHIBITING ASSISTED LIVING SERVICES AGENCIES AND CONTINUING CARE PROVIDERS OFFERING ASSISTED LIVING SERVICES FROM REQUIRING A THIRD-PARTY CONTRACT GUARANTOR.**
This bill seeks to address deceptive practices that could harm family members of those who receive care in assisted living facilities. When someone is admitted to a care facility, it is not an uncommon practice for family members or loved ones to be asked to sign a form to become a third-party contract guarantor. Sometimes, it is not clearly explained to a family member that signing off on such a form makes them personally liable should the person being admitted to the facility be unable to afford to pay for services. It is sad, but unfortunately it does happen that families are misled and end up signing a form that creates more hardship for them at a time when they are distracted with the overwhelming process of seeking care for their loved one. This bill would prohibit facilities from requiring that a family member sign off on being a third-party contract guarantor.

**SB 822 AN ACT CONCERNING CONVEYANCES OF PROPERTY OWNED BY A RECIPIENT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.**

This bill seeks to encourage the department to decide on a request in a timely manner and to adhere to current real estate law regarding titles and conveyances.

I again thank the committee for their careful consideration of these proposals.

Sincerely,

[Signature]