

# Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-7100

AN ACT CONCERNING NONEMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION FOR

**Title:** NURSING HOME RESIDENTS.

**Vote Date:** 2/26/2019

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/19/2019

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Aging Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

The bill would allow nursing homes with vehicles equipped for non-ambulatory residents to provide nonemergency transportation to the homes of family members of the residents. According to testimony, most nursing homes do not currently provide transportation for non-ambulatory residents for social visits with family, and having access to this transportation could have a positive impact especially on their emotional health.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

**Malread Painter, State Long Term Care Ombudsman, State of Connecticut Department of Rehabilitation Services:** Supports the concept of the bill, but believes that the bill needs further development before they can offer their full support. Testified that the service should be available to all residents of long term care communities and should also be able to participate in community events such as town meetings as well as visit family.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Matthew V. Barrett, President and CEO, Connecticut Association of Healthcare Facilities:** Mr. Barrett testified that he supports the bill but with recommended revisions. Mr. Barrett testified that such family visits are already routinely provided for nursing home residents. Mr. Barrett also testified that the bill would add “unreimbursed administrative costs” for nursing homes and that liability would be extended if the nursing home is providing the transportation. The organization supports the bill in concept, but recommends that the

provision be amended so that it is permissive and not mandatory for nursing homes to provide the transportation.

**State Representative Kathleen M. McCarty:** Rep. McCarty testified that the bill has the potential to improve the emotional health of non-ambulatory nursing home residents by allowing them to have access to transportation to have visits with family members, and will therefore help decrease feelings of loneliness and isolation and can help alleviate feelings of depression. Rep. McCarty urged the committee to support the bill and to send it to the full assembly.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut:** Ms. Morelli testified that while they appreciate the intent of the proposal, there are currently challenges regarding medical transportation and growing time demands on staff members who accompany the residents on those visits. She stated the proposal would cause an additional strain on staffing needs. Ms. Morelli also raised concerns on how the bill does not discuss the number and frequency of trips that can be requested and therefore cannot support the mandate at this time.

**Robert Shea, Attorney, International Association of EMTs and Paramedics:** Mr. Shea testified that they oppose the bill in its current form. Mr. Shea testified that the bill does not include who can transport residents to and from their family's homes. He testified that the that the bill be amended to clarify that "depending upon the resident's medical condition, only trained licensed professionals such as EMTs and paramedics should be able to transport and provide care" for the residents during these trips.

**Reported by:**  
**Gaia McDermott, Clerk**  
**Avarice Jacovino, Assistant Clerk**

**Date: 3/1/2019**