



*Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging:  
Agency on Aging of South Central CT  
North Central Area Agency on Aging  
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[www.ctagenciesonaging.org](http://www.ctagenciesonaging.org)*

## **Public Testimony, Senate Bill 1056**

The Connecticut Agencies on Aging advocate for older residents and offer supportive services designed to improve the quality of life for older adults.

According to the Health System Tracker of the Kaiser Family Foundation, "While there are people with high health care spending at all ages, overall, people age 55 and over made up 29% of the population but accounted for 56% of all health spending in 2016. In contrast, people under age 35 made up 46% of the population but accounted for less than a quarter of health spending. The health care expense burden is particularly daunting to older Connecticut residents facing a high cost of living. Seniors challenged to either pay for utilities and food or pay for health care expenses.

The current income limits for HUSKY C (for people who are elderly or disabled and not able to regularly work) are just 82% of the Federal Poverty Level in most parts of the state (93% in Fairfield County). This is \$885/month or \$10,620/year for a single person (\$11,900/year in Fairfield County). The income limitations in this program leave individuals *living in poverty* by federal standards without access to basic health care expense relief. Complex spend down rules are nearly impossible for an elder to navigate and sometimes lead to premature institutional placement.

We ask the legislature to pass SB 1056 and ensure income eligibility is the same for all adults across all three main Medicaid programs, at 200% of the poverty level. While this is still a relatively low level, with 200% of poverty for one being \$2148/month (\$25,776/year), it is a major improvement, which we strongly endorse.

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