Good afternoon Senator Hochadel and Representative Garibay, Vice Chairs Senator Miller, and Representative Fortier and Ranking Members Senator Seminara, and Representative Bolinsky. Thank you for your time and your commitment to supporting older residents of our State.

**Public Testimony for \*H.B. No. 5296 -***AN ACT CONCERNING FAMILY HOME CARE OVERSIGHT AND EXPANDING THE CONNECTICUT HOME-CARE PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY*

**AgingCT** supports H.B. 5296, an Act Concerning Family Care Oversight and Expanding the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly. State oversight to identify the persons eligible, interested, and enrolled in the *Adult Family Living* service will lead to better program data. The data can help increase participation for underserved, eligible, families in need of long-term care services to prevent premature institutional placement.

There are typically two models to compensate family caregivers. Clients must first enroll in the Medical Assistance Program’s waiver, also called *CT Home Care Program*. Functional and financial criteria are required to qualify. The **Adult Family Living (AFL)** service can pay a family member a stipend through an AFL agency, which provides training and oversight to ensure the efficacy of the care plan.

The second, **Personal Care Attendant,** allows a family member to provide care through a“consumer-directed option.” Connecticut permits this consumer-directed option under a Medicaid waiver or a state-funded portion of the CT Home Care Program for people who can self-direct their care. In this model, the care recipient is in the role of “employer” and utilizes a fiscal intermediary to manage payroll for the family caregiver.

Legally liable or legally responsible relatives, defined as a spouse or parent of a minor child, are able to provide care for older loved ones in Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wisconsin.1 Adding this feature to the menu of services available to individuals in Connecticut’s Medicaid waiver could lead to reduced family caregiver burn out, better quality care and more options for diverse populations. A note of caution, AgingCT suggests a pathway for reporting suspected fraud or neglect within the family caregiver model to include swift investigation and intervention.

AgingCT suggests implementing a marketing campaign for all Medicaid waiver options, not just Adult Family Living. The general population is unaware and confused by the alternatives to nursing home placement and would benefit from information of community-based options. Promoting Adult Family Living should be part of a campaign that includes personal care attendants, adult day services, homemakers, companions, meals, and nursing services. So often, families knew nothing of the alternatives and therefore placed a loved one in a nursing home. An inclusive marketing campaign including all facets of the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly, offers a menu of services to support a multitude of caregiving models designed to meet a family’s care needs. The Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly is an incredible alternative to nursing home care.

Connecticut’s five Area Agencies on Aging collaborate under the name, AgingCT. We are independent, nonprofit organizations, with federal designation, dedicated to help older adults and persons with disabilities thrive in the community with dignity and support throughout their lives. We advocate and educate legislators, policy makers and Connecticut residents on the issues of importance to older constituents and those who support them. Visit [www.agingct.org](http://www.agingct.org/) to learn more.

Submitted by:

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On behalf of AgingCT