



Raised Bill 324 AN ACT CONCERNING PROBATE COURT OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION.

Greetings the Chairs of the Judiciary Committee Senator Winfield and Rep. Stafstrom, Co-Chairs Senator Flexer and Rep. Quinn, and Ranking Members Sen. Kissel, and Rep. Fishbein. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important topic.

My name is Maureen McIntyre and I'm the CEO of the North Central Area Agency on Aging. My agency is proud to be a member of AgingCT, the association of the five statewide Area Agencies on Aging.

It has been a rare occasion for our organization to provide testimony to this committee and so I will take just a moment to provide a brief introduction. Area Agencies on Aging have our roots in the Older Americans Act of 1965. Our charge is to ensure that older adults have access to the services and supports they need in order to function as safely and independently in the community as possible, and for as long as possible.

And it is on that note, that we are presenting this testimony for your consideration; that the right to dignity and self-determination is not bound by age or ability.

Raised Bill 324 324 AN ACT CONCERNING PROBATE COURT OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION provides language that strengthens individuals' rights and requires broader circumspection toward actions that may impinge on these rights. That issues that may appear before court such as but not limited to appointment of power of attorney, assignment of conservatorship, and installation of health care directives would be treated with the gravitas commensurate with those decisions and would be required to appear.

In philosophy and upon execution, Raised Bill 324 supports the concept of Supported-Decision Making. In brief, that individuals have the right to direct their life course together with input from a team of their choosing; people who know them best and in whom great faith has been entrusted. AgingCT wholeheartedly concurs with this intention as it applies to older adults and is proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with the advocates who have been building the case for support for many years.

On behalf of AgingCT, I would also like to take a moment to highlight the foundational work of the Connecticut Supported Decision Making Coalition and Attorney Jonathan Martinis and to thank them for their generosity of time and expertise.



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 to learn more.

Submitted by:

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On behalf of AgingCT