

Human Services Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1416

AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPANSION OF LONG-TERM CARE OPTIONS

Title: FOR MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES.

Vote Date: 3/14/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/6/2025

File No.: 477

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services Committee

CO-SPONSORS OF BILL:

Sen. Martin M. Looney, 11th Dist., Rep. Sarah Keitt, 134th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill expands long-term care options for Medicaid beneficiaries by requiring the Commissioner of Social Services to develop and rebalance a plan that increases access to home and community-based care. It asks the Long-Term Care Planning Committee to study and report on ways to further expand these options, including potential cost savings from reducing reliance on skilled nursing facilities.

With growing need for at home and community-based care in our state this is a fundamental step to further assist our citizens. With better outreach and more concrete planning this bill can insure more elderly folks have access to the care that works best for them and in the least restrictive environment.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Connecticut Department of Social Services \(DSS\), Commissioner, Andrea Barton Reeves:](#) appreciates the interest in the area but states they have already been working on this for over a decade to shift more Medicaid long-term care into home and community settings. DSS believes new legislation is unnecessary since rebalancing efforts are ongoing and federal funding supports this work. The department also has concerns about costs and resource demands.

[Office of Policy and Management, Secretary, Jeffrey Beckham](#): appreciates the committee's interest in the topic but have concerns on the reporting deadline and beyond that, suggest that the report is not needed as the data is already available in the Long-Term Care plan that was submitted to the committee earlier in the year. They also summarize the plan that was already submitted.

[Commission Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity, Nutrition Policy Analyst, Christian Duborg](#): supports this bill and recommend the state explore expanding Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) to include spouses as eligible for compensation as caregivers under Medicaid and other state-funded programs. They also believe in looking into using AI to simplify the process.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Connecticut General Assembly, State Senate, Martin Looney](#): supports this bill and adds that residents deserve access to quality information regarding long-term care. He reminds that many would prefer care at home and that we need to expand access to this type of care. He states rebalancing Medicaid-funded long-term services would allow elderly residents to choose the best care for them.

[Connecticut Citizen Action Group \(CCAG\), Associate Director, Liz Dupont-Diehl](#): supports this bill and believes this is a positive start to concepts that are fleshed out in SB 804.

[Leading Age Connecticut, President, Mag Morelli](#): Supports this bill and its call for expanding options and services for home and community-based Medicaid programs. They mention their current plan and the states decades long effort to rebalance the system.

[The Arc Connecticut, Director of Advocacy, Carol Scully](#): supports this bill and emphasizes the growing needs of the aging IDD population, who face greater barriers to housing, services, and support. The Arc recommends that people with IDD be included in the state's rebalancing efforts and in planning for aging and disability services.

[Connecticut LTCOP, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Mairead Painter](#): supports this bill and having folks have access to long-term care options. They believe in rebalancing Medicaid-funded long-term services by looking at gaps in services and quality of institutional and community-based care. They also advocate for expanding HCBS which aligns with the states long-standing efforts to rebalance its long-term care system.

[Disability Rights CT, Attorney Litigation, Sheldon Toubman](#): supports this bill and proposes eliminating waiting lists for home care waivers, increasing staff support for the Money Follows the Person program, and improving access to the Community First Choice Medicaid option.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Lynn McClurkin](#): opposes this bill and urges folks to look into alternative treatments for health issues.

Reported by: Christian Talariski

Date: 4/2/25