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Written testimony of Matthew V. Barrett, President/CEO of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities (CAHCF), in support S.B. No. 463 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FACILITIES RESOURCE PLAN FOR PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY.

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg and to the members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Matthew V. Barrett, President and CEO of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities (CAHCF), our state's one hundred and fifty-three member trade association of skilled nursing facilities and rehabilitation centers. Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in support of **S.B. No. 463 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FACILITIES RESOURCE PLAN FOR PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY.**

The bill would establish a task force of the Connecticut General Assembly to study the short-term and long-term needs of persons with intellectual disability. The task force would (1) examine alternative underutilized resources, including, but not limited to, nursing homes and rehabilitation centers, that may be repurposed to meet such needs, and (2) develop a state-wide facilities and resources plan designed to meet such needs. As Connecticut policy makers continue to deliberate on the future of Southbury Training School and on issues related to the DDS wait list for services to persons with intellectual disability, Connecticut skilled nursing facilities would like to participate in being part of the solution to these pressing policy issues.

Today there are some three thousand open beds in Connecticut nursing homes. We believe that a model can be developed, with the input of all stakeholders, as part of the spectrum of choices providing appropriate and cost-effective residential services in available nursing home space. We envision this as one possible component of the solution. An evaluation of the needs of the population, as this bill provides, is an important first step, and will inform the model to address the needs. We see various possibilities to make an important contribution to providing residential services in cases where there are highly complex medical needs and where medical care needs are not as intensive. This objective is fully consistent with our state's long term services and supports rebalancing initiative and the repurposing of nursing home infrastructure. Further, we believe there is every opportunity to save scarce state resources while meeting the needs of an underserved population.

For similar reasons, we also support **S.B. No. 296 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM TO SERVE PEOPLE SEEKING RESIDENTIAL SERVICES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.**

This bill would establish a Department of Developmental Services (DDS) pilot program to serve persons who are eligible and waiting for residential services from the department. The pilot program would evaluate and establish alternative service models in which certain persons who are currently receiving residential services may be moved from their existing residential placement, with the consent of the person or such person's legal guardian, into more independent, less expensive settings.

The purpose of this initiative would be to provide persons who have been waiting to receive and are in critical need of residential services with a residential placement. The pilot program would evaluate service models, such as shared living arrangements, housing clusters, community companion homes, habilitation services and the use of assistive technology. Finally, the bill calls on DDS to work with stakeholder organizations, including, but not limited to, the Arc of Connecticut, Alliance, and the Council on Developmental Disabilities, in establishing the pilot program. CAHCF would be happy to be included among the stakeholders working on these pressing issues and hope that nursing homes could be included among the residential choices under consideration for further development in S.B. 296.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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