



**FEBRUARY 7, 2023**

**Written testimony of Matthew Barrett, President and CEO of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities and the Connecticut Center For Assisted Living (CAHCF/CCAL) - SUPPORT FOR Workforce Development Bills before the HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE**

Senator Slap, Representative Haddad, and distinguished members of the HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE, my name is Matt Barrett. I am the President and CEO of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities and the Connecticut Center for Assisted Living (CAHCF/CCAL), a state trade association and advocacy organization of one-hundred and sixty skilled nursing facilities and assisted living communities. **We applaud the leadership of the committee for addressing critically important health care workforce development issues in our state and specifically support:**

**Proposed H.B. No. 5437 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A STUDENT LOAN SUBSIDY PROGRAM FOR POLICE OFFICERS**

**Proposed H.B. No. 5438 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A DEBT-FREE STATE COLLEGE PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYEES OF DAY CARE FACILITIES, HOME HEALTH CARE AGENCIES AND NURSING HOMES.**

**Proposed S.B. No. 740 AN ACT CONCERNING CRITICAL SKILLS IN DEMAND BY EMPLOYERS IN THE STATE.**

**S.B. No. 936 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.**

The need to prioritize and protect our state's growing elderly population with meaningful workforce development solutions is a pressing matter of concern. The current staffing shortage already shows an access to care crisis here in Connecticut and forecasts that it will worsen in the next years.

An American Health Care Association (AHCA) report "State of the Nursing Home Sector" released this week illustrates the impact that long-standing economic and workforce challenges are having on our seniors and their access to care here in Connecticut and across the nation. (See [State-of-Nursing-Homes-Infographic.pdf](https://www.ahcypressoffice.org/files/State-of-Nursing-Homes-Infographic.pdf) ([ahcypressoffice.org](https://www.ahcypressoffice.org))).

*Highlights from the report include:*

### **Historic Labor Shortage**

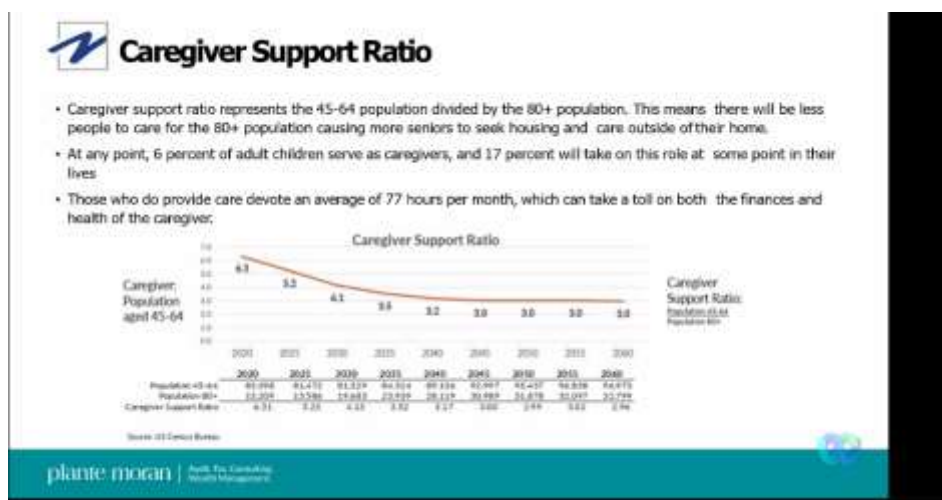
- Nursing homes experienced the worst job loss of any health care sector during the pandemic, with 210,000 jobs lost from February 2020 to December 2022.
- Workforce levels are the lowest they've been since 1994.
- At the current pace of modest job growth, nursing homes would not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2027.
- 84 percent of nursing homes are currently facing moderate to high levels of staffing shortages.

### **On the Financial Brink**

- 55 percent of nursing home providers say they are operating at a loss.
- 52 percent may not be able to continue operating for more than a year at the current pace.

### **Access to Care Crisis**

- 54 percent of nursing home providers say they are having to limit new admissions due to staffing shortages.
  - 465 nursing homes have closed over the course of the pandemic, displacing 18,071 residents.
- It is especially alarming, as demonstrated in the chart below, that current forecasts show there will be less people to care for our over-80 years old population at a time when they will need a vibrant system of caregivers across the health care spectrum:



The workforce development proposed bills before the committee represent meaningful policies for both the immediate and long-term. Thank you and we look forward to continuing to work with the committee to advance solutions for our state's seniors so that they will access to the high-quality care they deserve.

***For additional information, contact: Matt Barrett, [mbarrett@cahcf.org](mailto:mbarrett@cahcf.org) or 860-373-4365.***