

February 23, 2009

# Legislative Update

## The Connecticut Association for Home Care & Hospice

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### CAHCH's Legislative Breakfast

**February 24**  
Click here to register

### Deadline for Favorable Reports

**March 5**  
Aging

**March 19**  
Human Services

**March 23**  
Public Health

**April 3**  
Appropriations

**Dear Jennifer,**

Join the [Connecticut Association for Home Care & Hospice](#) (CAHCH) in its advocacy efforts by attending the annual legislative breakfast on Tuesday, February 24, beginning at 8 a.m. at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. For more information or to register [click here](#).

Over the past two weeks, CAHCH has been advocating on your behalf regarding issues that are relevant to home care and hospice and the ability for your agency to deliver the best quality of care. Below is a discussion of selected House & Senate Bills of particular interest to CAHCH. For a full list of bills that CAHCH is tracking from the previous two weeks, [click here](#).

Please let us know if you have any suggestions regarding the update. Suggestion or questions can be emailed to Jennifer Bernheim at [bernheim@cahch.org](mailto:bernheim@cahch.org).

## Advocacy in Action

February 13

### CAHCH Met with Senator Jonathan Harris and Representative Betsy Ritter, Co-Chairs of the Public Health Committee

As a result of this meeting, Sen. Harris and Rep. Ritter agreed to review specific proposals regarding APRNs serving as attending physicians in hospice and aligning the frequency of state licensure inspections with federal survey frequency. CAHCH has shared more information on both ideas with the Public Health Committee.

February 18

### CAHCH testified at the Appropriations Committee Hearing on the Governor's Budget Proposals Regarding Human Services

Brian Ellsworth and Kim Skehan both testified on behalf of CAHCH members regarding the Governor's Budget, S.B. No. 843.

CAHCH opposes the Governor's budget proposal to mandate the use of unlicensed personnel to administer medications in residential care homes. To read the full testimony, [click here](#).

CAHCH testified that Medicaid home care rates are grossly inadequate and that there is a necessity to maintain commitment of system reform efforts such as the Money Follows the Person initiative and the Long Term Care Reinvestment Account. Brian also noted that CAHCH strongly supports the Governor's proposed Medicaid coverage of telemonitors, yet is concerned that there is no statutory language in the Governor's proposed implementer bills. During his testimony, Brian also stated concerns about delays in implementation of the Medicaid Hospice Benefit. To read the full testimony, [click here](#).

February 19

### CAHCH testified at Select Committee on Aging Hearing

Brian Ellsworth testified on behalf of CAHCH members regarding [S.B. No. 814](#), An Act Concerning Personal Care Assistance Services Under the Connecticut Home Care Program For The Elderly. CAHCH is concerned about the wholesale expansion of Medicaid-funded PCA services to the elderly unless there are adequate protections in place, including requirements for training, supervision, pre-employment screening and requirements to ensure that elderly clients are self-directing and making an informed choice about this option. To read the full testimony, [click here](#).

February 24

**Human Services Committee Public Hearing at 9 a.m.**

February 26

**Labor & Public Employees Committee Public Hearing at 3 p.m.**

## Select Bills

The following are select bills that CAHCH has been following over the past two weeks.

[S.B. No. 853](#) AN ACT LIMITING LIABILITY FOR HOMEMAKERS AND COMPANIONS WHO TRANSPORT HOME CARE RECIPIENTS

[H.B. No. 6332](#) AN ACT CONCERNING HOME HEALTH CARE AIDES AS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

[S.B. No. 489](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A SINGLE POINT OF ENTRY FOR LONG-TERM CARE

[S.B. No. 243](#) AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING IN PAIN MANAGEMENT

[H.B. No. 5312](#) AN ACT CONCERNING CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR EMPLOYEES OF HOMEMAKER-COMPANION AGENCIES

[S.B. No. 814](#) AN ACT CONCERNING PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANCE SERVICES UNDER THE CONNECTICUT HOME CARE PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY

## Feature Issue - Deficit Mitigation Act

Governor Offers \$1.1 Billion Plan



Friday, February 20, Governor Rell announced that her budget office now estimates the shortfall in the current year's state budget at about \$944 million, up about \$22 million from last month's estimate. The shortfall is due to an overall drop in tax collections of more than \$73 million, a decline in sales tax of \$54 million, and a decline in real estate conveyance taxes of \$19.1 million, which were partially offset by a \$40.1 million increase in Medicaid revenue by the federal government.

This announcement follows Thursday's (Feb. 19) delivery to the Legislature of a deficit mitigation plan that would cut \$1.1 billion in state spending through deeper state agency cuts and a state employee early retirement incentive plan. The Governor's plan, like the last two mitigation plans, avoids using layoffs or tax increases to close the current state budget deficit. The Governor has directed the Office of Policy Management to carefully track the economic effects of the federal stimulus package; hoping that the money, once flowing in to CT, will have a positive effect on income, sales, and other taxes.

The Governor notes that she is moving up to April 1 many of the cost-cutting measures that she proposed earlier in the month in her two-year budget, which includes medication administration for eye drops.

"What they [taxpayers] want is for state government to take the same sensible action they have taken in their homes and businesses - spending cuts, consumption reduced and big-ticket desires deferred. It's time the Legislature got that message," Governor Rell said. To view the Governor's plan, [click here](#).

## Budget

Appropriations Requested to Identify \$2.8 Billion in Budget Cuts



*Senator Williams and House Speaker Donovan (photo courtesy of Senate Democrats)*

On February 19, the four Democratic Leaders of the General Assembly - Senate President Donald E. Williams, Jr., Speaker of the House Christopher G. Donovan, Senate Majority Leader Martin Looney, and House Majority Leader Denise Merrill - requested in a letter that the Democratic co-chairmen of the Appropriations Committee - Senator Toni N. Harp and Rep. John C. Geragosian - identify \$2.8 billion in potential budget cuts for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 biennial budget. Citing the enormous dollar difference between Gov. Rell's FY 2010-2011 budget deficit projections and estimates as reported by the nonpartisan State Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA), the leaders asked that these cuts be identified by March 9th.

The letter also stated that OFA estimates that the federal stimulus bill recently signed by President Obama has less money designated for Connecticut than Gov. Rell included in her proposed biennial budget. According to the Democratic leaders, the difference is nearly \$100 million in each year of the biennium.

Additionally, Senator Williams called on Gov. Rell to submit to the legislature a proposed budget "addendum" that would detail her plan to close a projected \$8.6 billion deficit for the 2010-2011 biennium, which would require Gov. Rell to identify at least another \$2.6 billion in programmatic, personnel, and other state budget cuts as well as identify other sources of revenue.

"It is abundantly clear that the governor did not meet her fiscal responsibility to submit a workable biennial budget to the state legislature. Now, as majority Democrats begin the task of doing what the governor should have done, we seek her input," Senator Williams said.

[S.B. No. 843](#)

### **AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING SOCIAL SERVICES**

To implement the Governor's budget recommendations.  
2/5/2009 Referred to Joint Committee on Human Services

To view the Governor's proposed budget, [click here](#).

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The Connecticut Association for Home Care & Hospice | 110 Barnes Road | Wallingford | CT | 06492