

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

SA 14-20

SB178

House	7074-7079	6
Senate	2061-2065, 2156-2157	7
<u>Aging</u>	<u>58-59, 83, 84-85, 116-117</u>	<u>7</u>
		20

H – 1201

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2014**

**VOL.57
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6912 – 7260**

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry for the confusion. We're about to set up our third consent calendar for the evening, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that -- I would like to move the following items to the Consent Calendar, all of which are in concurrence with the Senate.

Senate Bill 293, House Calendar Number 539 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar Number 321; Calendar 486 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 542 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 540 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 507 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 411 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 472 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 314; Calendar 132 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 116 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 541 as amended by Senate "A" and Senate "B".

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Aresimowicz, I believe that a couple of the bills that you called were actually Senate calendar numbers, not House calendar numbers. So I believe the Clerk knows what you're intending, he

mhr/md/ch/cd/gm
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

564
May 7, 2014

may -- with your indulgence, I was going to ask him
to, perhaps, offer the correction.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, maybe for clarification, I'll go
through the bill numbers very quickly.

It being Senate Bill 29 --

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Mr. Speaker -- excuse me, Mr. Speaker. Is this
the appropriate time for one to object to all the
items on the Consent Calendar?

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

It would be.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

I will object to all the items on the Consent
Calendar. I would respectfully request that we talk.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir.

With that objection, we will suspend action on
the Consent Calendar so that the Minority and Majority
Leader may talk.

[Pause.]

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I -- just to clarify, I'm going to run through the bill number and the calendar number.

It would be Senate Bill 293, which is Calendar 545; Senate Bill 429, which is Calendar 539; Senate Bill 115, which is Calendar 321; Senate Bill 203, which is Calendar 486; Senate Bill 71, which is Calendar 542; Senate Bill 447, which is Calendar 540; Senate Bill 61, which is Calendar 507; Senate Bill 75, which is Calendar 411; Senate Bill 321, which is Calendar 472; Senate Bill 66, which is Calendar 314; Senate Bill 178, which is Calendar 495; Senate Bill 430, which is Calendar Number 489; and Senate Bill 425, which is Calendar 51 -- 541.

And I move adoption of the Consent Calendar.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Mr. Clerk, does that match your listing of the calendar numbers?

THE CLERK:

430, Mr. Majority Leader, Senate Bill 430 is calendar what?

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

489.

THE CLERK:

Yes. It does, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

And, Mr. Majority Leader, could you also indicate -- I'm sorry to have to delay this for a second, but according to my notes, all of those -- well, most of those are adopted -- or amended by Senate "A"? If you could just --

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Correct, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

specify --

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Except the first and the last, sir. The last one being Senate "A" and "B," sir.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you. As long as we're clear about the amendments that have been adopted in the Senate.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Correct, Mr. Speaker. And I move passage of the bills on today's Consent Calendar Number 3.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of the Consent Calendar Number 3?

Staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House is voting on Consent Calendar Number 3.

The House is voting by roll. Will members please return to the chamber immediately.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted?

Take your time, Representative Boukus.

Would members please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Consent number -- Consent Calendar Number 3

Total Number Voting	147
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	147
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	4

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The Consent Calendar is passed.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 506?

THE CLERK:

Calendar 506, on page 25, favorable report of the joint standing committee on Appropriations. Senate

Bill 55, AN ACT CONCERNING COMPLAINTS THAT ALLEGED MISCONDUCT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY PERSONNEL.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (146th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for the acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Question's on acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Will you remark, sir?

REP. FOX (146th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Clerk has an amendment, LCO Number 4583. I'd ask that it be called, and I be allowed to summarize.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 4583, which has been previously designated Senate Amendment "A."

S - 675

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2014**

**VOL. 57
PART 7
1971 - 2310**

rgd/gbr
SENATE

173
May 1, 2014

Good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR DOYLE:

I just wanted to ask the -- the President to PT
this bill please.

THE CHAIR:

The bill will be PT'd.

SENATOR DOYLE:

But please call the next bill.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you very much.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 33, Calendar 132, Substitute for Senate
Bill Number 178, AN ACT CONCERNING SENIOR SAFETY
ZONES, favorable report of the Committee on Aging.

THE CHAIR:

I'm sorry, Senator Ayala. Good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR AYALA:

Good afternoon, Madam President.

I move acceptance of the joint committee's joint
favorable report and urge passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on acceptance and passage.

Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR AYALA:

Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of --

rgd/gbr
SENATE

174
May 1, 2014

of Amendment LCO 4123. May the Clerk please call that amendment and I be given leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 4123, Senate "A", offered by Senator Ayala and Representative Serra.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Senator Ayala.

SENATOR AYALA:

Thank you, Madam President.

Essentially the amendment simply strikes line -- excuse me in line 37 after designee it inserts "and" and strikes lines 38 and 39 in their entirety and also in line 40 it strikes number 9 and inserts number -- number 8 in lieu thereof.

I -- I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on adoption -- passage and adoption.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Seeing none, then I will try your minds on -- on Senate "A". All those in favor please say aye.

SENATORS: Aye.

THE CHAIR: Opposed?

The amendment -- Senate "A" passes.

Will you remark?

rgd/gbr
SENATE

175
May 1, 2014

Senator Ayala.

SENATOR AYALA:

Yes, Madam President.

This bill simply sets up a task force just like any other task force with the individuals appointing members to it and what that task force is set to examine is a couple of things.

Number one best practices nationwide for protecting senior citizens in their homes, at senior centers and at long-term nursing facilities from interaction with sexual offenders.

Number two legal considerations related to identifying persons convicted of sexual offenses and preventing them from entering public facilities where senior citizens live or congregate.

And also it will also provide data regarding the percentage of sexual offenders whose victims are elderly people.

What I'd like to do at this point, Madam President, I'd like to yield to Senator Osten, the introducer of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten, will you accept the yield, Ma'am?

SENATOR OSTEN:

Yes, Madam President, I will.

This bill is something that I've been working on for the last two sessions and it provides a task force to discuss the possibilities of setting up senior safety zones which would provide protections for senior citizens who are actively going to our senior centers and living in our elderly and disabled housing.

And what it does is give us the answers to the questions that were asked last year and will

rgd/gbr
SENATE

176
May 1, 2014

provide us with the necessary information to develop good policy to see if we can most effectively safeguard our seniors.

Now I've been traveling around the district and talking with people who work at nursing homes and who live in senior housing and -- and go to senior centers and, in particular, in the Montville and Norwich area have heard that they're increasingly concerned that some seniors are being put at risk of being taken advantage of by sexual offenders and often the same issue happens with seniors that happens with children.

They sometimes might forget what happened, just knowing that something bad happened. People tend to question their veracity and so I think that this task force allows us to provide information for -- for the Aging Committee so that we can possibly provide additional protections for our seniors living in senior housing and participating in the very needed senior centers that we have around the state.

Thank you very much and I thank the Senators -- the Senator on the Aging Committee for bringing this up.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Kelly.

SENATOR KELLY:

Thank you, Madam President.

I rise in support of this bill and I also would like to commend both Senator Ayala and Senator Osten for their leadership on this issue, particularly the leadership of the Senator from the 19th because it did start with her predecessor, Senator Prague.

rgd/gbr
SENATE

177
May 1, 2014

This bill essentially wants to do what everyone is looking for and that's safety and security in their home. And in this instance, it deals with a task force to look at best practices to ensure that our seniors, as they live in whether it's congregate housing, senior housing, nursing homes that they are safe, secure in their own home from sexual predators.

I think this is a good start to look at how to study this, how to look at the best practices and get that information so that then we can move forward in our state to ensure that our seniors are safe and I would urge its -- its adoption.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark?

Senator Ayala.

SENATOR AYALA:

Yes, Madam Speaker, if there's no objection, I'd like to move this item to the Consent Calendar as amended.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

Mr. Clerk.

MR. CLERK:

On page 3, Calendar 166, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 427, AN ACT CONCERNING SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS IN CERTAIN RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS AT THE TIME THE TITLE IS TRANSFERRED, favorable report of the Committee on Public Safety and Security. There are amendments.

THE CHAIR:

sj/gbr
SENATE

268
May 1, 2014

this. And there are many people to attest to this story because their lives have been turned around and they are healthy and intact. So, kudos to the leadership on the Insurance Committee and to all of the colleagues in the Circle who also got this and have supported it over the years.

Thank you, very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Not Senator Crisco? Do you want to --

SENATOR CRISCO:

Yes. If there is no objection, I'd like to place that on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if the Clerk would now proceed to read the items on the Consent Calendar so that we might then proceed to a vote on the Consent Calendar?

THE CHAIR:

Madam Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Call of the Consent Calendar Number 1 page 2.
Calendar Number 159, Senate Bill 269. Page 31,
Calendar Number 51, Senate Bill 43. And Calendar 43,
Senate Bill 10. Page 33, Calendar Number 132, Senate
Bill 178. Page 36, Calendar Number 199, Senate Bill

sj/gbr
SENATE

269
May 1, 2014

309. Page 39, Calendar Number 6, 268, Senate Bill
410.

THE CHAIR:

Madam Clerk, will you now call for the roll call vote on the Consent Calendar? And the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

There will be an immediate roll call vote in the Senate for the Consent Calendar Number 1. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. All Senators report to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate for the Consent Calendar. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed.

Madam Clerk, will you please call the tally?

THE CLERK:

All those voting on consent Calendar 1.

Total Number Voting	35
Necessary for Adoption	18
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar has passed.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**AGING
1 – 310**

**2014
INDEX**

people. I can honestly say from an experience it's a life-saving thing at times, not just a meal for the elderly.

And I want to thank you very much and I sure hope that this increase goes through so you can serve more people because it's a -- I -- I don't how many times I've said this. It's not just a meal, it could be life-saving.

And thank you very much for your time.

TIMOTHY GRILLS: Thank you very much.

REP. ROVERO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR AYALA: Representative, thank you for your comments.

Any further comments?

Thank you, sir.

TIMOTHY GRILLS: Thank you very much.

SENATOR AYALA: Bette Marafino, followed by Pahola Madera.

HB 5222

SB 179

HB 5228

BETTE MARAFINO: Good morning, Senator Ayala, and distinguished members of the committee.

I'm Bette Marafino, and I'm president of the Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans, and we represent about 50,000 seniors in the State of Connecticut. Our executive board endorses all the bills put forward by this committee, and we applaud your foresight in addressing the needs and the fears of the seniors in our state.

SB 178 SB 177

HB 5226

We noted that some of these raised bills had been on the agenda of the last legislative

session and died somewhere in the session and are back again, including the senior safety zones and the spouses allowable assets and increase in the personal needs allowance for the nursing home residents. And -- and thank you for reintroducing them and I hope that they will succeed this year.

Today I'd like to focus on three bills all dealing with the care of people with Alzheimer's and dementia diseases, Raised Bill 5222, AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED CARE FOR ELDERLY PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE; Raised Bill 179, which I'm happy to see has been talked about quite a bit this morning, A BILL CONCERNING THE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND DEMENTIA TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS; and Raised Bill 5228, AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR THE Alzheimer's disease RESPITE PROGRAM, which I can speak to that from personal experience.

That when my mother-in-law, who had been ill with dementia for -- for ten years, my brother-in-law needed help to even go out and pay his bills and get his car repaired and get a haircut when he took care of her until her dying day at home.

I recently heard a very sober report on NPR about a couple of weeks ago which said that cases of Alzheimer's and dementia are rising at a very rapid rate, and that society will need to address all of the attendant issues that come with these diseases. And training of personnel who care for these patients is crucial.

About a year ago at a visit -- when I visited my family physician she was telling me that she is on-call a couple of times a month to -- to

very aware of the important issues and in our (inaudible) with both sides of the aisle, that's why they're here, will all of them make it through? Probably not, but we think they're so important that we put them back on again at least to make the General Assembly aware and -- and the Governor's office.

So thank you for you testimony.

MARIE ALLEN: The community thanks you all.

REP. SERRA: Senator?

SENATOR OSTEN: Well, thank you very much. I'm Cathy Osten, I'm the State Senator for the 19th District and I'm really happy to be a part of this committee.

But formally I would just like to say that there are three pieces of legislation that are on -- on -- that I would like to see us take up and pass this year.

SB178

First, I would like to see us take up and pass House Bill 5001. The rental cost relief to seniors and disabled, is something that I consider to be vitally important for the 19th District. There are many -- I received many phone calls after this program was capped and I have many people that are suffering greatly and choosing things that I would rather not see our elderly -- elderly citizens choose.

Secondly, is House Bill Number 5223, AN ACT INCREASING FUNDING FOR ELDERLY NUTRITION. I've been working with the City of Norwich, one of my largest towns, on this issue. They most recently were down to serving food only one day a week through TVCCA. And in concert with the city council, we were able to get them back up to four days.

But those are our neediest citizens that were down to just getting food one day a week. They were getting all of it, but all at one time, and it's more than just about the food. It's about that regular interaction with people.

And lastly, I have from the Mayor of Montville, another one of my constituent towns, written testimony on Senate Bill Number 178, AN ACT CONCERNING SENIOR SAFETY ZONES. And I have presented that to you; you have it writing there. The town council approved the ordinance in 2012 and through a variety of mechanisms it was repealed later on that same year because the town was concerned about litigation.

I ask again that we look at senior safety zones. Having worked in the Department of Corrections I state repeatedly that sex offenders do not just target children, they target our elderly. They target populations that are at risk. And when we have residents in nursing homes and people who are keeping in homes who are suffering from Alzheimer's and a variety of other diseases, they're at jeopardy from someone who's acting badly.

And if we needed more information on this, I would recommend that perhaps an -- in conversation with a variety of nursing homes, they consider this an issue that they would like to see addressed. I'd like to see us come up with a task force that would look at this situation. I'd be happy to serve on it, because I consider this to be very important that we figure out what we're doing and how we can protect our seniors from sexual assaults and sexual abuse.

Thank you very much for letting me speak on this. And, again, the mayor's written

testimony has been provided to all of you.

REP. SERRA: Any questions from the committee?

Thank you, Senator.

Is there anybody here who hasn't signed up wishing to speak?

Okay. With that, I notify the committee that the next meeting we're going to have because of the lack of room space will be at 9:00 a.m. on March 4th, in Room 1C, and we have, I think, approximately six bills for public hearing.

March 4th, 9:00 a.m. in Room 1C. And with that, can I have a motion to adjourn.

Motion made and seconded. All in favor?

Okay. Thank you all.

PCSW Testimony
 Before the Aging Committee
 February 25, 2014
 Page 2 of 3

Administration, the average monthly Social Security check received by women is \$774 per month versus \$1,006 for men; an elderly couple receives an average monthly Social Security income of \$1780.⁴

According to the Connecticut Elder Economic Security Standard Index (ESSI),⁵ Social Security income falls short of what is needed for seniors to meet basic expenses (housing, healthcare, transportation and food), which is \$1,700 to \$2,600 a month for a single elder, and \$2,600 to \$3,500 for an elderly couple.

If couples have managed to build and retain assets, they should be allowed to utilize those assets to maintain their own households and live independently. S.B. 177 would make this possible by allowing the community spouse to keep a larger portion of the couple's assets to take care of themselves and pay for uncovered medical expenses.

H.B 5001, AA Providing Rental Cost Relief to Eligible Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

H.B. 5001 restores the Renters' Rebate program that was closed in the FY '14-'15 Biennium budget to new applicants. The average rental rebate for a married couple is between \$400 and \$500 and the average rebate for an unmarried applicant is between \$600-\$700. Elderly women (who make up the majority of the elderly population in Connecticut) and disabled women would benefit from rental cost relief.

Housing costs (mortgage or rent, taxes, utilities and insurance) put a heavy burden on some elder households, representing as much as half of their total expenses. Additionally, many seniors struggle to make ends meet and 7% of CT's older adults live at or below the federal poverty line. As mentioned above, many seniors rely on Social Security as their only form of income which can be a challenge when paying for monthly expenses.⁶

Access to rental relief would help Connecticut's elderly and disabled populations who are struggling to achieve economic security.

H.B 5224, AA Increasing Public Assistance to Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children

H.B. 5224 would provide equal benefits to grandparents and caretaker relatives who are raising children regardless of whether the child is committed to the Department of Children and Families. Passage of this bill would potentially benefit 61,408 Connecticut children (7.5% of all children living in the state) are living in grandparent-headed or nonparent caretaker households.

CT Specific Data

The Children

- 45,922 children under age 18 live in grandparent-headed households (5.6% of all children in the state)
- 15,486 children under age 18 live in nonparent relative households (1.9% of all children in the state).
- Of the children above, 18,195 live in homes where grandparents are completely responsible for their welfare; with 7,161 having no parents present in the home.

⁴ U S Department of Labor Women and Retirement Savings, 2008

⁵ The Gerontology Institute, University of Massachusetts Boston, and Wider Opportunities for Women *The Elder Security Initiative Program: The Elder Economic Security Standard Index for Connecticut, 2009* Prepared for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women and the Connecticut Commission on Aging

⁶ Ibid

⁷ AARP Foundation *Connecticut GrandFacts* Accessed February 1, 2013 at www.grandfactsheets.org Data based on U S Census Bureau 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Detailed Table B09006 and Subject Tables S1001 and S1002

PCSW Testimony
 Before the Aging Committee
 February 25, 2014
 Page 3 of 3

The Grandparents

- 19,153 grandparents are the householders responsible for grandchildren living with them.
- 50% are White, 26% are Black/African-American, 21% are Hispanic/Latino, and 3% are Asian.
- 36% have no parents of the children present in the home.
- 65% are under age 60.
- 16% live at 100% of the federal poverty level.

If H.B. 5224 is passed economically eligible grandparents and nonparent caretakers could receive on average, \$777.00 to \$1,469.09 for each child, depending on the child's age and needs from the Department of Children and Families' subsidized program versus the "child only" TFA payment averaging \$354 a month for one child.⁸

It would be beneficial to provide all the financial assistance that is available to assist these grandparents and nonparent caretakers in raising these children.

H.B. 5225, AA Increasing Eligibility for the Connecticut Home-Care Program for the Elderly

H.B. 5225 would extend eligibility to the Connecticut Home-Care Program for the Elderly to those with assets of \$40,000 for single individuals and \$65,000 for married couples. This bill could benefit Connecticut seniors who represent 14% of the state population. It is also important to keep a careful eye on the funding for the CT Home Care Program for Elders, in recent years we have seen this program modified a number of times, including imposition of substantial co-pays. Prioritizing maintenance of current funding and reducing co-pays is a very wise investment.

Impact on Connecticut Women.⁹

- 14% of Connecticut's population are aged 65 and over – 285,405 women and 202,650 men.
- Within the senior population, 59% are female and 41% are male.
- 66% of Connecticut residents over the age of 85 are female.

Access to the Home-Care Program insures that elders and people with disabilities remain in their homes, rather than long-term care institutions. Passage of this bill would allow these individuals to remain independent through self-directed care in a community setting.

We look forward to working with you to address these important issues. Thank you for your consideration.

⁸ Office of Legislative Research Report *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*, August 30, 2012

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2009 Population Estimates