

## House Republican Press Release

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### Home Care for the Elderly to Be Expanded



#### Rep. Marilyn Giuliano Applauds Passage of “Money Follows the Person” Bill

A bill that significantly widens the eligibility criteria for a program that enables people who need long-term health care to receive it at home rather than at nursing homes received final legislative approval this session from the General Assembly. State Representative Marilyn Giuliano (R-23) cosponsored the bill which received broad bipartisan support. This legislative initiative has been forwarded to Governor M. Jodi Rell to be signed into law.

This legislation significantly expands the current Money Follows the Person demonstration program that had allowed up to 700 individuals to use their Medicaid benefits to cover long-term health care at their homes instead of at nursing home facilities. This new measure sets Connecticut on the path of dramatically improving the options that seniors and other people with long-term care needs will have.

The legislation will:

- Increase the number of individuals who can be served under the state's plan for participating in the federal ‘Money Follows the Person’ demonstration program from 700 to 5,000.
- Require the Department of Social Services to develop and implement a plan to be known as the Money follows the Person II, which will significantly expand the eligibility criteria for the program to enable people who formerly would not have qualified for home care services to receive them.
- Create a special account to hold and utilize the additional reimbursement funds (a 25 percent increase) the state will receive from the federal government to implement the program. The funds will be used to improve and enhance the infrastructure necessary for long-term care services in the state.

Rep. Giuliano expressed support for this legislation adding, “Expanding the ‘Money Follows the Person’ program is not only the right thing to do so people can stay in their homes, but it

is also a more cost-effective alternative to nursing home care. This legislation will help citizens throughout the state receive health care in the place they cherish most – their homes.”

Families often struggle to provide for the long-term health care needs of loved ones, and until now have had no alternative to nursing home care. With the option of home care instead, Connecticut residents who want to be cared for at home can choose that option.

“The ‘Money follows the Person’ bill shows that we can accomplish great things for the State of Connecticut when we work together in a bipartisan way,” said Rep. Giuliano.

Joseph and Maria Stango of Connecticut worked for this legislation for years on behalf of Mr. Stango’s elderly mother. They were responsible for gathering thousands of signatures from Connecticut residents in support of the measure, and organized the appearance of several dozen residents who attended and testified in favor of the bill at a public hearing conducted by the state legislature’s Human Services Committee in March.

Rep. Giuliano serves the 23<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District of Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook in the state House of Representatives.