

AARP Massachusetts
Cape United Elders
Community Action Committee Cape Cod and Islands
Greater Boston Legal Services
Greater Lowell Elder Mental Health Collaborative
Leading Age Massachusetts
Massachusetts Advocates for Nursing Home Reform
Massachusetts Association of Behavioral Health Systems
Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging
Massachusetts Hospital Association
Massachusetts Senior Care Association
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers - New England Chapter
National Association of Social Workers - Massachusetts Chapter
The Pass Group

December 9, 2011

By Hand

Secretary JudyAnn Bigby, M.D.
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
One Ashburton Place, 21st Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Re: December 9, 2011 Public Hearing on FY 2013 Budget: MassHealth Nursing Home Bed Hold

Dear Secretary Bigby:

We are writing to express our strong support for maintaining the current MassHealth Nursing Home Bed Hold provisions in the FY2013 Budget. As you are aware, this issue generated a great deal of attention in the FY 12 Budget process and fortunately after much debate and attention, the program was maintained, to the benefit of many nursing home residents and families.

As you know, Massachusetts has for many years recognized the importance of the 10 day bed hold policy to ensure that a hospitalized elder or resident visiting family can return to the same bed in the same facility. Although federal law requires facilities to readmit such residents to the first available bed in the facility of origin, this does not prevent the harm caused by placing the resident in a different and unfamiliar room with a strange roommate and different care giving staff. Especially for residents who are cognitively impaired, such relocation may cause confusion and depression; in some cases it may cause physical decline as well. Furthermore, residents who are hospitalized may remain there for a longer stay at greater cost to the Commonwealth until a bed is located.

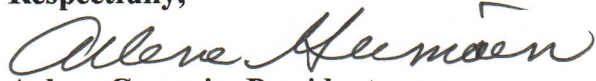
We were enormously gratified that the Governor and Legislature recognized the importance of reinstating the Bed Hold policy in a Supplemental Budget, and we urge you to continue these vital protections for MassHealth nursing home residents in the FY 13 Budget. It is extremely important to the elderly and disabled populations and their families.

December 9, 2011

RE: December 9, 2011 Public Hearing on FY 2013 Budget: MassHealth Nursing Home Bed Hold

Please maintain the current Nursing Home Bed Hold policy in your Budget Recommendation to Governor. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Respectfully,



**Arlene Germain, President
Massachusetts Advocates for Nursing Home Reform**

**Deborah E. Banda, State Director
AARP Massachusetts**

**Jacqueline Fossiano, President and Karin Roche, Vice President
Cape United Elders**

**Darlene Perkins, Senior Programs Advocate
Community Action Committee, Cape Cod and Islands**

**Wynn Gerhard, Managing Attorney
Greater Boston Legal Services on Behalf of our Clients**

**Frank E. Baskin, Coordinator
Greater Lowell Elder Mental Health Collaborative**

**Elissa Sherman, Ph.D, President
Leading Age Massachusetts**

**David Matteodo, Executive Director
Massachusetts Association of Behavioral Health Systems**

**David Stevens, Executive Director
Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging**

**Michael Sroczynski, Vice President
Massachusetts Hospital Association**

**W. Scott Plumb, Senior Vice President
Massachusetts Senior Care Association**

**Mary Jo Boynton, President
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers - New England Chapter**

**Carol Trust, Executive Director
National Association of Social Workers - Massachusetts Chapter**

**Deborah Thomson, J.D.
The PASS Group**