



March 4, 2021

To: House Finance
From: Economic Progress Institute
Re: Testimony in Support of H-5115

The Economic Progress Institute writes in support of H-5115, which would increase the income eligibility limit for the Home Cost-Share program from 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) to 250% FPL. The bill would enable more elderly Rhode Islanders to remain in their homes when they need daily support to do so and would promote the state's long-standing promise to "rebalance" long term care services by increasing investments and opportunities in community-based care vs. care in a facility.

The bill would benefit modest-income seniors who are ineligible for Medicaid because of income or resources but whose budgets do not allow for payment of home care and/or adult day services so they can be safe. Or the individual may pay for services, but need to make sacrifices elsewhere in their budgets.

It is estimated that an additional 430 individuals would become eligible for the Home Cost-Share program if the bill is enacted. They would still pay a portion of the cost of care and the state would pick up the balance, a wise use of the tax dollars that these seniors have been contributing to the state throughout their lives.

The proposal is also a 'cost-saver' since the cost to the state to expand the Home Cost-Share program is so much less than Medicaid-funded nursing home care that seniors might need to turn to.

We urge the committee to recommend passage of the bill and to include the statutory change and funding in the FY 2022 budget. It is the right thing to do – fiscally and morally.

Thank you.