

# Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-124 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES' RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING MUNICIPAL AGENTS FOR

**Title:** AGING.

**Vote Date:** 3/5/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/19/2026

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Aging Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill would amend the requirements for municipal agents for elderly persons by allowing municipalities to share municipal agents. It replaces reference to “elderly persons” with “older adults” and prohibiting municipal agents from having a conflict of interest that could interfere with their ability to provide financial or personal benefit that might interfere with their ability to provide unbiased information, assistance or referrals.

## **SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):**

None applicable

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

**Ms. Amy Porter, Commissioner, Dept. of Aging and Disability Services:** This is an **agency proposal**. The bill adds language explicitly prohibiting the appointment of an individual with a real or perceived conflict of interest and requires agents to certify this fact in writing. It also defines what a conflict of interest is. The bill would also allow two or more municipalities the option of sharing a municipal agent through a Memorandum of Understanding or agreement. Finally, the bill updates reference to the “elderly” a term that is no longer being used in the field of aging services.

**Ms. Mairead Painter, Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Dept. of Aging and Disability Services:** They are in **support** of this proposal. Municipal Agents are often the first trusted

point of contact when an individual is trying to understand benefits, access housing opportunities or navigating complex service systems. They believe that this bill would strengthen the statutory foundation for municipal agents for the aging.

**Ms. Kathleen Holt, Healthcare Advocate, Office of the Healthcare Advocate:** This bill attempts to add necessary protections into a highly trusted position, that of the Municipal Agent for the Elderly. Over this past year, it became obvious to the OHA that the position of municipal agent is vulnerable to conflicts of interest abuse. From town to town the position of municipal agent must remain trusted and unbiased. This bill would add safeguards to help achieve this effect.

**Mr. Michael Werner, Lead Aging Analyst, Commission on Women, Children, Savors, Equity & Opportunity:** They are in **support** of this legislation. The bill will give clarity to the importance of preventing potential conflicts of interest by those who inhabit these important municipal guiding roles. This certification will help to ensure that residents can have confidence that our municipal agents on aging will not be personally benefiting or creating unjust enrichment due to the authority of their positions.

#### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None submitted

#### NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

**Mr. Michael Criss, First Selectman, Town of Harwinton:** His testimony was in **opposition** to this proposal. He is concerned that the bill places undue emphasis on the state-level oversight of conflicts of interest in a way that may create barriers for municipalities and discourage volunteer participation. The additional state-directed certification and reporting requirements related to perceived conflicts of interest may deter participation and complicate recruitment and retention. He feels this shifts authority away from towns which are in the best position to evaluate local relationships, community dynamics and the practical realities of service delivery.

He recommends that the bill be revised in several ways. **1/** The municipality shall determine if a conflict of interest exists for purposes of appointing or retaining a municipal agent of aging. **2/** The municipal agent shall acknowledge in writing their understanding of conflict-of-interest expectations and policies established by the municipality. **3/** Final authority for determining and managing any conflict shall rest with the municipality and **4/** Any state role should be advisory while recognizing the importance of local control.

**Ms. Sarah Dzialo:** She is **opposed** to this bill. Mandating standardized certifications by municipal agents increases administrative cost and may discourage local agents from serving, thereby reducing community capacity and burdening taxpayers. If conflict of interest concerns exist, targeted enforcement under existing fiduciary and criminal law is preferable to new blanket discloser mandates that expand government control.

**Reported by: Richard Ferrari, Assist. Clerk**  
**Reviewed by : Elizabeth Aheart, Clerk**

**Date: 3/10/26**