

Public Hearing on Bill No. SB462
"AN ACT CONCERNING A FAIR SHARE HEALTH CARE SURCHARGE"
March 9, 2006
Testimony by: Delora Musslin

Honorable Senators and Representatives of the Committee on Labor and Public Employees,

My name is Delora Musslin; I am a graduate student at the University of Connecticut, School of Social Work. I am here today to testify on Bill No. SB462 "An Act Concerning A Fair Share Health Care Surcharge." I support this legislation and would hope that you will not oppose it.

Today I come before you as an advocate of social justice, as a student of social work, and as a person concern for the welfare of their community members. Having good health care coverage is of vital importance for the stability of any person's health. Amartya Sen, a modern development theorist added the concept of capabilities to the definition of development. The capabilities approach addresses the issue of positive values in terms of what should be available for human beings. Amartya Sen writes "that it is not enough for humans to be free from hunger but rather they should be well nourished." When a company denies their employees the right to have complete health care coverage at a cost that they can afford, that company is contributing to the detriment of their workers health. Wal-Mart is not living up to their responsibilities in taking care of their employees. With high premiums and high deductibles the average Wal-Mart employee with family is paying a high price for the company's "everyday low costs." I will not refute that the bargain deals Wal-Mart offers does not appeal to me, it is hard to pass up their prices when you live on a fixed income as I do, but my conscience will not allow me to shop their as long as they treat their employees with such great disregard.

In closing, the "Fair Share Health Care Surcharge" is a bill that would bring security to those who are working hard but are being denied the benefits they deserve. It would make large retailers with five thousand or more workers, to take responsibility for the community in which they are a part of. To the Committee Members, I ask you to not oppose this bill, support the hard work of the working class, and contribute to the stability of your constituents' lives.

I appreciate your time in hearing my testimony, and would be happy to answer any questions, thank you.