

Alicia Hill
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Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Alicia Hill and I am a graduate student at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 462 "An Act Concerning A Fair Share Health Care Surcharge." I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak on this issue today.

What does the smiley yellow face really mean? You're greeted with smiling faces welcoming you to Wal-Mart. At least 10 times a day we see the Wal-mart symbol flash across the screen reinforcing consumers about the wonderful company that they are. They remind consumers of the community work that they perform and the magnificent benefits that the company provides for its employees. I must admit I was impressed and at one point encouraged others around me to seek employment at Wal-mart. But that was then. That was when I uninformed.

Accessible health care is an issue that is not only important to me, but it is an issue that is important to the 46 million uninsured Americans. Despite employees being paid below livable wages, employers continue to charge inconceivable amounts for health care, which forces many families to seek state assistance. It is unimaginable to believe that someone who is making \$8.00/hr would be able to afford insurance premiums at the price of \$231.74 for the employee and their spouse. It is imperative that we hold companies accountable for refusal to provide affordable health care.

I have had my own share of experiences and I am here to tell you today, I know someone who is one of the 46 million. My aunt is a single mother of three and an employee at Wal-Mart. She has worked at Wal-mart for over five years and has seen little increase in her wages. She has struggled to maintain financially, emotionally, and mentally. Anyone can imagine what is like to not only have to figure out ways to provide for yourself, but also for your family. To explain to your children your hesitancy in

going to the hospital or doctor or to explain, that you have just spent your last \$50 dollars to pay for prescriptions.

I urge you to support this bill. It is unjust that we have 46 million uninsured people in a country that advocates democracy and equal opportunity for all.