

Testimony Before the Public Health Committee – January 31, 2007
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Local 32BJ SEIU member

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Diana Rivera and I am a member of Local 32BJ SEIU. I live in Hartford and have worked as a janitor for 2 years.

However, because I work part time, my employer does not provide health insurance. I have two children and they do not have health insurance. Every time one of them gets sick, I must pay the doctor or hospital out of my pocket and it is expensive. When a member of my family is ill, it makes it more difficult to pay other bills. It is very hard to choose between putting food on the table or making sure my child gets well.

I worry every day about not having health care, and so do my co-workers. Even though we work hard every day at two and three jobs, it's a struggle to make ends meet and we cannot afford to pay for health care ourselves.

The bottom line is that all people, including low wage workers, need to have health care and we need to work together to find a way to fix this problem. We thank Senator Williams for making health care reform a priority and his plan is a good first step, but we need to do more. We need to get every Connecticut resident insured with universal health care that is accessible, affordable and sustainable.

Our union, Local 32BJ, supports health care for all and we look forward to working together to make it happen. It's time to make sure everyone has health care.