

**Public Health Committee Public Hearing
Testimony for SB 1052
February 21, 2007**

I am writing in support of CT bill SB1052 regarding health care transportation. As the current program coordinator of medical services to special populations at Generations Family Health Centers, I see on a daily basis the linkage between access to transportation and positive health outcomes.

Many of our clients have no access to public transportation, especially in the rural areas of Danielson up through Putnam and have to rely on informal networks of rides which often are unreliable. Taxi service, while available in most areas, is not feasible as the cost is prohibitive to most of our special populations.

There are several clients in our local shelter who are trying to move on in their lives and obtain housing and work. Medical conditions prohibit them from working at this time, so they are focusing on getting the health care they need at our community health center. Because the shelter is in walking distance of the health center, they have chosen to stay at the shelter to be able to maintain their health care at this time. The few options for housing that they could afford are too far away and not within access to a bus line.

When the shelter is no longer an option for these people, they will have to deal with the issue of how to get to their medical appointments. We often see that the longer a client has to travel to get to their health care provider, the less likely they will be to make it to their appointments resulting in increased use of the local emergency room and poor health outcomes for the client. The addition of dollars for health care transportation would help to elevate one of the most prominent barriers to health care for low income people. I urge you to support SB1052 which will help increase positive health outcomes and help to reduce the use of emergency services which would far out weigh the costs of the transportation itself.

Thank you for your consideration,

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