



Connecticut State Dental Association

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Legislative Testimony
Raised Bill 7322 AAC Medicaid Managed Care Reform
Committee Bill 3 AAC Increased Access to Health Care Through the HUSKY Program
Raised Bill 7375 AAC Health Care Access and Expansion of the HUSKY Program
Public Health Committee, Monday, March 5, 2007
Dr. Jack Mooney, President

Good morning Senator Harris, Representative Villano, and members of the Human Service Committee. My name is Dr. Jack Mooney, and I am currently the President of the Connecticut State Dental Association (CSDA), which has over 2,500 members, and constitutes 84% of all Connecticut dentists. The Connecticut State Dental Association thanks you for this opportunity to testify.

I have been a practicing dentist in Putnam since 1989. I treat Medicaid adults and currently treat HUSKY kids for free. It has taken me close to two years to become credentialed with a local clinic, Generations, in an attempt to treat their overflow patients who wait embarrassingly long periods of time for treatment. I have seen this epidemic and have tried to be part of the solution. I realize that this epidemic is not specific to my corner of the state, but instead, statewide, and have and will continue to do everything that I can to ensure that my fellow dentists throughout CT are part of the solution as well.

Committee Bill 3 & Raised Bill 7322

On behalf of the CSDA, I would like to thank all of the legislators on this committee, for not only realizing that there is an oral access to care issue in CT, but for also having the courage to finally address the financial issues associated with access. To illustrate CSDA's commitment in addressing the oral health care access problem, I have attached recent actions of the CSDA House of Delegates to this testimony. I feel that this clearly demonstrates our willingness to actively be part of the solution.

It is my belief that the dentists in CT will step up to the plate once the rates have been raised to the 70th percentile. To date, we have pledges from over 390 private practitioners who will either treat Medicaid patients for the first time, or take on additional patients (please see attached a geographical distribution of these pledges). It is my belief that once the rates have been raised,

many dentists who currently are interested but have yet to pledge, will do so. We, the CSDA and the State of Connecticut, cannot fail another generation of children. The time to act is now. We are ready.

Raised Bill 7375

I wholeheartedly support Section 3 of this bill for the same reasons that I mentioned in my testimony on Committee Bill 3 and Raised Bill 7322.

I am, however, very much opposed to Section 4 of this bill.

During the past fifteen years, several states have experimented with health care provider taxes. However, almost all of them have either eliminated the tax or significantly reduced the amount of the tax. Based on my preliminary research, no state has created a provider tax which is directed at one category of provider and sought to impose the cost of caring for the indigent on one type of provider.

In Kentucky, in the early 1990s, the legislature imposed a 2% tax on physician services. The tax was phased out in 1999. West Virginia imposed a 1.75% tax on certain health care services, including dental services. This tax will be phased out entirely by 2010. New Mexico repealed its general receipts tax on health care services in 2004. What's more, what may be considered the most successful example of the provider tax, Minnesota's 2% tax on health care providers, has been unstable. It has been subject to multiple increases and decreases since it was imposed. Clearly, in the few states where they have been adopted, health care provider taxes have not been a reliable source of revenue.

Connecticut now proposes to tax providers of dental health care services specifically, which is even more burdensome and unfair than a tax of general applicability. If a tax is imposed on dental services alone, then dentists may be forced to increase their rates. Unlike medical doctors, many dental patients do not have dental insurance. The proposed revenue tax could result in an explicit or implicit increase in fees for uninsured residents of Connecticut. This could also put Connecticut dentists at a financial disadvantage with their competitors across state lines in New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Connecticut should follow the majority of states and forgo this proposed tax.

I thank-you for listening to my testimony today, and will make myself available to answer any questions that you may have now, or that you may have at any other time.

CSDA: COMMITMENT TO ACTION

In an effort to illustrate the CSDA's commitment in helping to solve the oral access problem, I would like to share with you the following action items which were agreed to by the Connecticut State Dental Association's (CSDA) House of Delegates meeting on February 7th, 2007:

- **CSDA will actively lobby** to have the standard fee schedule for the HUSKY and all other state funded dental programs that are based upon Medicaid fees increased to and maintained at the 70th percentile of fees charged by CT dentists as determined by the most current National Dental Advisory Service Comprehensive Fee Report.
- On the condition that the HUSKY and all other state funded dental programs that are based upon Medicaid fees are increased and maintained at the 70th percentile of fees charged by CT dentists as determined by the most current National Dental Advisory Service Comprehensive Fee Report, the CSDA will: **Commit to recruiting additional members as providers in the programs; charge a CSDA employee with facilitating education, recruitment, and credentialing of prospective new providers.**
- The CSDA will **convene a working group** of representatives from the "safety net" dental facilities in CT such as community health centers, school-based dental services, hospital-based dental services, etc. to plan a symposium on utilization of safety net facilities in the state. The goal of this symposium will be to **improve the efficiency and effectiveness** of these safety net facilities to better address their mission of providing care to the uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid insured populations of CT. The CSDA will coordinate administrative activities of the working group, and **will commit to sharing the financial support for this symposium with other partners at a CSDA cost up to \$10,000.**
- The CSDA will form an ad hoc committee to develop and submit to the state Department of Education an **oral health curriculum** that would be incorporated in the "Healthy and Balanced Living Framework." This committee will be encouraged to work with the CT State Medical Society and the CT Association of Pediatricians to add an oral health component to the "medical home."
- The CSDA delegation to the American Dental Associations (ADA) annual meeting will submit a resolution directing the ADA to develop an **oral health curriculum for use in school systems nationwide.** We hope to impress upon our children the value and importance of good oral health and hygiene over their entire life time.

PLEDGES BY TOWN - DETAILED

TOWN	PROVIDER SETTING			CURRENT PARTICIPANT IN HUSKY A/MEDICAID		IF YES - WOULD YOU SEE MORE PATIENTS IF REIMBURSEMENT RATES WERE RAISED TO 70%		IF NO - WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IF REIMBURSEMENT RATES WERE RAISED TO 70%	
	Private	Safety Net	Teaching	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Ansonia	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ansonia/Southbury	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Avon	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
Bethany	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Bethel	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Bloomfield	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Bolton	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Branford	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
Bridgeport	1	0	0	15	5	0	5	0	15
Bristol	1	0	0	5	3	0	3	0	5
Brookfield	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1
Burlington	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Canaan	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Canton	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
Cheshire	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
Chester	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Clinton/Madison/Old Saybrook	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Cromwell	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Danbury	6	0	1	5	1	0	1	1-?	4
Danielson	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Derby	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
East Granby	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
East Hampton	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
East Hartford	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

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	Private	Safety Net	Teaching	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
East Hartford/ Manchester	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
East Lyme	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
East Windsor	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ellington	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
Enfield	1	0	0	1	3	0	3	1	0
Essex	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Fairfield	1	0	0	9	2	0	2	1	8
Farmington	10	1	4	10	4	0	4	0	10
Glastonbury	11	0	0	8	3	1	2	0	8
Granby	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	Maybe - 1	1
Greenwich	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
Groton	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Hamden	9	0	0	8	1	0	1	0	8
Hartford	4	0	0	0	4	0	4	0	0
Hebron	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Higganum	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Jewett City	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kensington'	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Killingworth	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Litchfield	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Madison	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Manchester	14	0	0	9	5	0	4	0	9
Meriden	7	0	0	5	2	0	2	0	5
Middlebury	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

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	Private	Safety Net	Teaching	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Middletown	5	0	0	4	1	0	1	0	4
Milford	11	0	0	7	4	0	4	0	7
Morris	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
New Britain	7	0	0	3	4	0	3	0	3
New Canaan	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
New Fairfield	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
New Hartford	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
New Haven	15	0	0	13	2	0	2	0	13
New London	7	0	0	3	4	0	4	0	3
New Milford	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Newington	4	0	1	2	3	0	3	0	2
Newton	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
North Branford	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
North Haven	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
North/West Haven	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Norwalk	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	2	3
Norwich	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	0
Norwich/Colchester	4	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	3
Old Greenwich	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Old Lyme	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Old Saybrook	5	0	0	4	1	0	1	0	4
Orange	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Plainville	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Plantsville	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

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	Private	Safety Net	Teaching	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Pomfret	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Portland	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Prospect	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Putnam	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0
Ridgefield	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Rocky Hill	7	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
Shelton	3	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	2
Simsbury	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
South Windsor	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Southbury	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Stafford Springs	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Stamford	12	0	0	9	3	1	2	0	9
Storrs	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Stratford	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Suffield	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Terryville	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0
Torrington	8	0	0	7	1	0	1	0	7
Trumbull	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	4
Vernon	5	0	0	2	3	0	3	0	2
Wallingford	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	11
Waterbury	11	1	0	9	3	0	3	1	8
Waterstown	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
West Hartford	17	0	2	13	5	0	5	1	12
West Haven	9	1	1	9	1	0	1	1	8

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	<i>Private</i>	<i>Safety Net</i>	<i>Teaching</i>	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Westbrook	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Westport	3	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	2
Wethersfield	3	0	0	2	1	0	1	1	1
Willimantic	1	3	0	1	3	0	3	0	1
Wilton	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1
Winsted	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Woodbury	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Yalesville	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1