



N A S W

National Association of Social Workers / Connecticut Chapter

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**Testimony of Gretchen Vivier, MSW**  
**Health Care Organizer, NASW/CT**  
**Labor and Public Employees Committee**  
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Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of the Committee. My name is Gretchen Vivier. I am the Health Care Organizer at the National Association of Social Workers in Connecticut (NASW/CT).

Though NASW ultimately supports a single payer universal health care system – something like Medicare for all – we also support the concepts of **Proposed House Bill 6333** An Act Expanding the State Employee Health Plan and **Proposed House Bill 6678** An Act Increasing the Availability of Health Care for Connecticut Workers

HB 6333 would allow more people to access comprehensive coverage at more affordable rates. It would be a great first step in taking advantage of economies of scale and showing how well a state-run system can work for health care. And we certainly applaud Representative McCluskey for recognizing that whatever kind of health care system we have needs to spend a higher proportion of its costs on medical care as opposed to administration and profits.

However, even with both of these bills taken together, Connecticut would still be missing out on some of the advantages of a single payer system. Most of you have probably seen the *Sounding the Alarm* report published by the Universal Health Care Foundation ([www.universalhealthct.org](http://www.universalhealthct.org)) showing that a single payer system would cost less to the state AND have the most positive effect on the economy.

A single payer system is also more efficient and easier to understand. Everyone is automatically covered. There is only ONE place to send paperwork for reimbursement. There is only ONE set of rules (i.e. what medications require preauthorization). Health care providers would know the rules, and could better help their patients.

Single payer is also more equitable because everyone is in the SAME system. Access to health care is NOT determined by a profit motive or by ability to pay. There is no way we can equitably distribute illness and injury, but we can equitably distribute the costs.

Most importantly, for individuals and for the public good, a single payer system is more secure and reliable. The state has accountability to the people it serves. They will still cover you when you are sick. They won't disappear as many HMO's have.

When a system is made up of many pieces, there will always be gaps and inefficiencies. With a single seamless system, however, quality and access can be managed more efficiently.