



# DISTRICT LODGE 26

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Testimony of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers District #26  
Regarding H. B. No. 6693

AN ACT CONCERNING CREATION OF A STATE HEALTH CARE PLAN  
Public Health Committee  
February 26, 2007

Senator Mary Ann Handley and Representative Peggy Sayers, and members of the Committee, my name is Bill Shortell with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers ("IAM"). The IAM supports House Bill No. 6693, to create a state health plan to provide quality, affordable health care for all Connecticut residents.

IAM has a long history of supporting the Single Payer Health Plan. In every collective bargaining agreement companies are shifting their responsibility for health benefits to workers and their families, and members are seeing their health benefits erode while bearing more of the costs. Health benefits are the #1 reason for strikes, as dramatically demonstrated by the Sikorsky strike last year and imminent Stop & Shop strike this year.

There are many benefits to a Single Payer Health Plan. Aside from covering everyone, it would be portable and continuous. It would cost less than the present system. Because the state is the direct purchaser of services from health providers, high overhead and profits of private insurers and HMOs would save millions annually. Savings would also be realized through eliminating administrative costs and waste in the current system.

A Single Payer Health Plan would mean people out of work, on layoff, on strike or retired before age 65 would not have to worry about health care coverage. Furthermore, it's the fairest system. A standard benefit package would apply across the board for all necessary care. As a result, it would cost business less, making Connecticut more competitive and grow the economy by increasing household income for other needs.

In closing, we commend policymakers for making access to health care a top priority. As seen the status quo is no longer a viable option and therefore hope you will pass this bill.

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony.