

The Business Council of Fairfield County

Strengthening Businesses. Strengthening Communities.

March 14, 2007

TO: **Public Health Committee**
Hon. Mary Ann Handley, Co-Chair
Hon. Peggy Sayers, Co-Chair
Hon. Elizabeth Ritter, Vice Chair
Hon. Gayle S. Slossberg, Vice Chair
Hon. Andrew Roraback, Ranking Member
Hon. Mary Ann Carson, Ranking Member



From: Tanya Court, Director, Public Policy and Programs, The Business Council of Fairfield County

Jack Mahoney, M.D., Corporate Medical Director, Pitney Bowes Inc.

RE: **Raised Bill Number 7376: An Act Establishing the Connecticut Health Information Network**

First, I would like to thank the Public Health Committee for drafting this bill. Connecticut does not have a clearly defined, integrated and coherent health data and information system. This bill is an excellent start and goes a long way towards unifying existing data on health and health status for Connecticut residents. The resulting Connecticut Health Information Network will be a useful tool for investigators, policy makers, consumers and purchasers of health care, and advocates to understand the overall health of the Connecticut population.

Housing this at UCONN positions CHIN as a shared resource for the various state agencies and departments. That said, we would suggest the following revisions:

1. The governing board, described in Section 2 has representatives from all sectors except purchasers of health care. Given our current employer-based health system, we believe that the purchaser perspective should be more explicitly stated.
2. For full usability by purchasers of health care, quality and financial data are essential. We would like to see an explicit reference to the future inclusion of these data points.

Connecticut is facing a health care crisis. Our health care system is one of the costliest in the world. Yet, the high rate of spending has not translated into better health outcomes. While most Americans believe that our health care system is the best in the world, a number of studies indicate that Americans receive less than optimal care. Expanding access to cost effective, high quality health care is important to improving the health and productivity of Connecticut residents.

Effective governments and high performance organizations use data to shape decisions and to drive performance. Consumers and purchasers of health care need reliable information in order to make good decisions selecting a health plan, hospital, or clinical practice, or when choosing among alternatives treatments. These needs can be met by establishing the Connecticut Health Information Network and we look forward to the day when Connecticut will become national leaders in the information that it provides to public and private sector leaders, policy makers and citizens to improve community and individual health.