CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION of NONPROFITS

...to serve, strengthen and support Connecticut's nonprofit community.

Public Health Committee
January 31, 2007
SUBJECT MATTER: Universal Health Care
Senate Bill No. 1
House Bill No. 6332
Submitted for the record by Ron Cretaro, Executive Director

The Connecticut Association of Nonprofits represents nearly 500 nonprofit organizations state-wide, approximately 300 of which are state funded health and human services providers. These nonprofit providers are essential to a strong and healthy Connecticut, many serving as the safety net for the most vulnerable members of our society. They meet community needs related to education, health, addictions, developmental disabilities, mental health, transportation, housing, child development and public safety, among others. One of the major concerns all of these providers share, regardless of mission, is that of quality and affordable health care for every resident in our state.

The Connecticut Association of Nonprofits supports Universal Health Care from the perspective of providers and consumers, employees and employers. The nonprofit health and human services sector is a safety net full of growing holes. The concern is not only for the 400,000 uninsured residents of Connecticut, most of whom fall into the category of "working poor", but also for the hard working staff of our members who are sometimes underinsured or just one pay check away from being uninsured, and for our nonprofit organizations that struggle desperately to afford quality health insurance for their staff while living with the reality of decades of under-funding by the state and federal governments.

The CT Association of Nonprofits is a supporter of the Universal Health Care Foundation of CT and the five endorsed principals of a health care reform plan:

1. Health care coverage should be universal, meaning it covers everyone.
2. Health care coverage should be continuous, portable from job to job, and cover the periods between employment.
3. Health care coverage should be affordable, especially to low-income individuals and families.
4. The health insurance strategy should be affordable and sustainable for society.
5. Health insurance should enhance health and well-being by promoting access to high-quality care that is effective, efficient, safe, timely, patient-centered and equitable.

It is important to ensure a few other basic principals in the development of a plan for CT.

1. RATES: Adequate rates are necessary to accessing care.
2. MANDATES: Important insurance mandates, such as those in mental health and addiction treatment, gender parity, etc., must be preserved.
3. PREVENTION: Prevention through outreach and educations will save money in higher levels of care in the long-run.

Committee members are encouraged to work in a bi-partisan effort to accomplish the goals of Universal Health Care and make CT a leader in this effort. You should feel free to contact me for assistance or with questions. Thank you.

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