



State of Connecticut

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Testimony of State Representative Pamela Sawyer In Opposition to House Bill 5617

Before the Human Services Committee
February 26, 2008

I want to thank the Human Services Committee for the opportunity to express my **opposition to HB 5617**, *An Act Delaying Implementation of and Making Revisions to the Charter Oak Health Plan*. I believe this bill defeats the legislature's intent to make healthcare accessible to those uninsured and harms any progress the Department of Social Services has made thus far in doing so.

Last June, the legislature appropriated \$13 million to the Charter Oak Health Plan to establish health coverage through a public-private partnership. The plan will help all adults who don't receive insurance through work or don't qualify for state assistance to purchase affordable plans from participating providers for no more than \$250 a month.

DSS is currently reviewing RFPs from Managed Care providers and plans to have the program functioning by June 2008 – *that's only 4 months away!* Furthermore, this bill will scare quality managed care providers from submitting proposals and will reduce the number of providers in the pool necessary to keep costs low.

The committee should allow the Charter Oak Health Plan to progress and develop as originally intended. It would be premature to make any assessments on its value and effectiveness until the program is up and running. Delaying progress will simply incur unexpected costs. I respectfully request the committee not take action on this bill.