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**Statement
Of
Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield
On**

H. B. No. 5902 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HOSPITAL STAFFING AND PATIENT ACCESS TO DEEP SEDATION AND GENERAL ANESTHESIA.

Good morning Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Christine Cappiello and I am the Director of Government Relations for Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Connecticut. I am here against **H. B. No. 5902 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HOSPITAL STAFFING AND PATIENT ACCESS TO DEEP SEDATION AND GENERAL ANESTHESIA.**

We are opposed to **HB 5902** because it seeks to add a new mandate for all individuals and group policies, including the State of Connecticut State Employees Health Insurance Plan. Mandates remove any choice that employers or individuals might have in purchasing health care. Our goal as a managed care organization is to provide a comprehensive meaningful set of benefits to individuals and employers purchasing our product. How we accomplish this goal changes as the needs and desires of the market changes. Mandating benefits take away the flexibility insurers have in developing products in response to the needs of the marketplace. The cost of mandates may cause the purchasers of health care, specifically employers to stop offering health insurance all together.

We are also opposed to **HB 5902** because it is very broad as it is written. Under this legislation, we would be mandated to pay for anesthesia under any setting – hospital, surgical center or physician office. Perhaps more troubling than the significant raise in the cost of health insurance premiums that this mandate will bring about, it raises questions about many quality and patient safety issues. Because the legislation states that we must "provide coverage for a medically appropriate level of deep sedation or general anesthesia for any medical procedure requiring such sedation or anesthesia" that begs the question that we will be required to pay for anesthesia in potentially medically inappropriate setting simply because we must cover what the prescribing physician orders.

We would respectfully request that the committee not move forward with this bill.