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*TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 12, 2009*

I appreciate the opportunity to support the reappointment of Kevin Lembo as the Healthcare Advocate.

Kevin Lembo is a relentless and tireless champion of people who need health insurance coverage for vital, often life-saving, medical treatment. Under Kevin Lembo, the Healthcare Advocate Office has assisted more than 2,000 individuals annually. These individuals are ill-served by their health insurer and unable to vindicate their rights.

I know personally about these fights because we wage them together. Our offices are allies and partners in this critical cause of enforcing patient rights and making the system responsive.

With our help, many of these individuals successfully receive life-saving medical treatment prescribed by their health care provider.

Kevin Lembo has worked closely and collaboratively with my office jointly investigating unfair insurance practices new measures to protect consumers, including laws prohibiting insurers from unreasonably rescinding health insurance coverage after consumers file health insurance claims. We successfully advocated legislation to ensure proper coverage for necessary mental health services for children without requiring lengthy hospital stays.

Kevin is dedicated to transparency in health insurance practices. He has been a leader in the fight to open HMO records concerning the state's HUSKY and other medical assistance programs.

Kevin Lembo has all the qualities required of a successful Healthcare Advocate -- courage, caring, conviction. His record in this position demonstrates all the reasons that the office itself is so essential.

I urge the committee's favorable consideration of the reappointment of Kevin Lembo as the Healthcare Advocate.