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State of Connecticut
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Testimony
By
Rep. Mary G. Fritz, 90th District
Cheshire – Wallingford
on

HB 5021, An Act Concerning Expanding Health Insurance Coverage for Ostomy-Related Supplies

February 2, 2009

Chairman Crisco, Chairman Fontana, honorable members of the Insurance and Real Estate committee, I am submitting testimony in strong support of An Act Concerning Expanding Health Insurance Coverage for Ostomy-Related Supplies, HB 5021.

For the record I am Mary Fritz, the State Representative from the 90th District Covering parts of Cheshire and Wallingford.

As you know, this bill was presented to you last year and you very graciously voted it out of the committee. This bill also passed the house by a weak margin. Unfortunately, in the waning days of the session it did not get called in Senate. So here I am again – hoping this time for passage by both chambers and the Governor’s signature.

I would now like to beg your indulgence and give you a brief history of this bill on ostomy supplies and my involvement.

In 1999, a 30 year old constituent of mine came to me for help. Because of cancer, part of her intestine had to be removed and she was forced to have a colostomy. When she approached her employer about coverage for the supplies, the insurance company responded that these supplies "WERE COSMETIC" and would not be covered.

That year it did not make it to the floor of the House. But we came back again in 2000 and we were successful. Connecticut became the 1st state in the country to mandate coverage for ostomy supplies up to \$1000.

Eight years later, 2008, I came to you again and asked for your help because the cost of supplies annually far exceeded the \$1000 limit. Please remember without these supplies ostomy patients cannot and would not have a normal life -- needless to say absolutely no quality of life.

The compromise reached last year was a \$5000 annual limit.

Let's make history again in 2009 and have this proposal become law. Senator Crisco I'm counting on you!

Thank you