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OFFICE OF HEALTH CARE ACCESS

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Testimony of Commissioner Cristine A. Vogel, MPH
Office of Health Care Access
Public Health Committee Public Hearing
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Good Morning Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. I am Cristine Vogel, Commissioner of the Office of Health Care Access (OHCA). I thank you for the opportunity to testify on

House Bill 6264 "An Act Concerning State-wide Health Care Facility Planning"

This bill is not a new statute for OHCA but a proposal to update the language to better reflect the current issues of access. It consists of two parts:

1. a utilization study; and
2. a facilities plan.

The purpose of the Utilization Study is for OHCA to measure the current utilization of health care services and the distribution of such demand to identify areas of possible unmet need by geographical areas, subpopulations or other factors. The state-wide facilities plan will incorporate the current utilization and demand for services identified in the Utilization Study and it will evaluate the expansion, reduction or modification of health care services as demand and technology change. This process will engage the health care industry by creating one or more advisory bodies which will be established by the Commissioner. Recommendations from the established advisory bodies and authoritative organizations; such as those on best practices and evidence-based research, shall be incorporated into this plan. The Commissioner will develop a process that encourages hospitals' to incorporate such plan into their long-range planning; and OHCA will facilitate communication between appropriate agencies concerning innovations or changes that may affect future health planning.

The Office of Health Care is pleased to present this proposed bill to ensure our health care system remains responsive to the needs of our citizens while maintaining its viability.