

6402



**TESTIMONY OF
R. Christopher Hartley
Senior Vice President
Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center
BEFORE THE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 17, 2009**

HB 6402, An Act Concerning Maximization Of Medicaid Reimbursement For The State Of Connecticut and Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP).

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center is pleased to have the opportunity to submit testimony today on **HB 6402, An Act Concerning Maximization Of Medicaid Reimbursement For The State Of Connecticut And Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP)**.

HB 6402, proposes that the Commissioner of Social Services, in consultation with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, shall study and report on ways for the state to maximize federal matching funds. Saint Francis supports this proposal but recommends that action be taken now to take advantage of available federal matching funds.

Congress has just passed legislation that will deliver significant Medicaid relief to Connecticut, approximately \$1.32 billion over the next 27 months. As I understand it, this relief would begin as early as the first quarter of 2009 and comes in the form of an increased federal match to the Medicaid program. I believe Connecticut could see its federal match rate increase from fifty percent to around sixty-three percent.

Given the time limited duration of this lifeline it is critical that Connecticut act now to help support healthcare programs that provide services to some of the poorest citizens in Connecticut.

Therefore, I ask you to please amend HB6402 to take advantage of these available federal funds, using Medicaid funds to ensure that the federal stimulus package provides some desperately needed Medicaid rate relief to providers. I would also urge Connecticut to continue to pursue its waiver for the State Administered General Assistance Program (SAGA) at the same time.

Thank you for considering my view.