

March 30, 2011

Senator Toni Harp, Chair
Representative Toni Walker, Chair
Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Harp, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

We are writing to express our **opposition to Committee Bill 183** that establishes a separate “health and welfare account” for the existing vaccine and antibiotic purchase program described in sections 19a-7f to 19a-7j, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes so that it is not a line item in the state budget. The bill also seems to allow for an expansion of assessments to each domestic insurer and health care center to support the state purchase of childhood immunizations.

- Sanofi Pasteur, one of the leading manufacturers of vaccines in the U.S. and worldwide, along with other public health partners, agrees that in order to maintain a successful immunization enterprise, sustaining both a private and public market is critical.
- We believe that assessing each domestic insurer and health care center for the cost of vaccine beyond the entitled population is not in keeping with the legislative intent when the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program was established in 1993. This federal entitlement program provides vaccines free of charge for Medicaid eligible, uninsured, Native American and native Alaskans children. Underinsured children who receive immunizations at Federally Qualified Health Centers or Rural Health Centers are also eligible.
- This bill jeopardizes the discounts that are now offered because the VFC vaccine purchased through the CDC contract is only meant for the above entitled populations.
- Leading experts in the field of public health and economics agree on the importance of sustaining both a private and public vaccine market. The National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC) conducted two studies on vaccine financing issues in the United States. In their latest analysis, conducted in 2008, they agreed that “the successes of the current vaccine financing system in reducing vaccine-preventable diseases are the result of public and private sector collaboration,

reinforced by the VFC program.” Neither analysis of the vaccine financing system noted assessment of health plans as a potential solution.

- Sanofi Pasteur is a committed partner with public health to supply vaccines and invest in technology that will continue to produce essential vaccines and prevent disease. Policies that raise immunization rates and promote a healthy collaboration between the private and public sector are strongly supported by Sanofi Pasteur.

Therefore we urge you not to pass Committee Bill 183.

Sincerely,

Jim Dillman
Director, State Government Affairs and Immunization Policy
Sanofi Pasteur
Discovery Drive
Swiftwater, Pennsylvania 18370