



TESTIMONY OF Brenda Cerezo in Support of HB No. 6305 - *An Act Concerning Implementation of the Sustinet Plan* - before the Connecticut General Assembly's Insurance & Real Estate, Public Health, and Human Services Committees

Monday, February 14, 2011

Good Morning Joint Committees Members:

My name is Brenda Cerezo. I am a resident of Stamford, and proud owner of Cerezo Beauty Salon at 1091 Hope Street in Stamford, Connecticut, where I have operated for 14 years. I am a member of Small Business for Healthy Connecticut and the Co-Founder and Former President of the Connecticut Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

I am here to testify on behalf of Small Business for a Healthy Connecticut and hundreds of small business owners and independent contractors who support Sustinet. Even more specifically I am here to ask that you put Sustinet fully in place, so that business owners like myself can say goodbye to the nagging and persistent headache of outrageous healthcare cost that block the growth and profitability of our businesses.

Ten years ago, I went through a divorce. For me like so many others in my situation, that meant I lost my health insurance. During my marriage I was covered by my husband's insurance plan. Since I'm a mother of 3, that meant my children lost their insurance as well.

I thank God every day, that my profession gave me the skills to put food on the table, keep a roof over my head, and keep my family together. The children are grown now, but still I have no health insurance. I can't afford it. For the past 14 years, my beauty salon has been open 7 days a week, I have 3 loyal employees. I'd like to keep them, but the unpredictable and high cost of health insurance makes me nervous and unsure of my ability to keep paying for the benefit. I am active in my community, and I've come here to tell you that the need for affordable, quality healthcare that goes along with you, no matter what your marital or job status is real.

TESTIMONY OF Brenda Cerezo in Support of HB No. 6305 - *An Act Concerning Implementation of the Sustinet Plan - 2/14/2011*

I keep praying to God to keep me healthy. Right now my health care would be going to the emergency room, because I don't have the choice of paying for a reasonably priced responsible alternative. I believe Sustinet can be that option.

Making the Sustinet plan affordable and available to small business owners and independent contractors, would be one of the best moves you could make to support Connecticut small business and the Connecticut economy.

Thank you.