

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Shawn Grunwald and I urge you to support SB1048, "An Act Concerning Dental and Health Reform".

As a mother of two still dependent children, ages 20 and 23, I am acutely aware of the importance to extend health insurance coverage to age 26. My son has significant health and dental issues and was without coverage when he became too ill to continue as a full-time student last year. At that point, he was no longer considered eligible for coverage and was dropped. Thankfully, he was reinstated in our medical plan under federal health reform.

However, the insurance industry currently separates out dental and vision from overall health. Both of these are integral components of overall health. As many parents can testify, the current wave of unemployment impacts young adults and diminishes their financial ability to secure medical and dental coverage on their own. Extending dental coverage eligibility to age 26 not only makes good health sense but also good financial sense as it allows for routine, preventative care and avoids costly emergency and restorative care, as problems can be caught early and treated.

Lastly, passage of this bill does not place any additional burden on the state and will ensure that access to dental services is consistent with access to other health services as provided under federal health reform.

Once again, I urge you and your colleagues to support this bill.

Thank you.

Shawn S. Grunwald  
27 Clearview Drive  
Mansfield, CT 06250

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee: