



**Testimony of Connecticut Oral Health Initiative (COHI)
To Public Health Committee
In Support of S.B. 1202
March 23, 2011**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you in support of S.B. 1202, An Act Concerning The State's Health Care Workforce.

For the record, I am Dr. Linda Erlanger, Advocacy Consultant for the Connecticut Oral Health Initiative, also known as COHI. COHI is the state's leading oral health advocate, working with other stakeholders across Connecticut to advance oral health for all.

The Affordable Care Act, Title V seeks to improve access and delivery of health care services, especially to those individuals in underserved populations. Through enhanced education and training activities, there lie opportunities to strengthen the supply, distribution and diversity of the health care workforce.

Many competent, motivated students graduate annually from Connecticut's health care academic programs. Our State has been challenged through the years with both retaining these graduating professionals to work in our communities, as well as encourage them to provide treatment to populations in need and where health disparities exist. COHI endorses the multi-departmental collaborative approach to dealing with current and potential workforce issues and to enhancing professional skills through creative alternative methods.

We request your vote in favor of S.B. 1202. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact me at lindae@ctoralhealth.org or 860.246.2644, ext 202.