

**TESTIMONY  
BEFORE THE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
MARCH 23, 2011**

My name is Eric George and I am Associate Counsel for the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA represents approximately 10,000 businesses throughout Connecticut and the vast majority of these are small companies employing less than 50 people.

While the federal government has passed health care reform, more needs to be done to lower costs. More needs to be done to improve the health of our citizens. Employers find health care costs rising faster than other input costs. Some providers are unable to generate sufficient patient revenue to cover costs. Some patients cannot get timely access to optimal care. And too many individuals remain without health insurance, engage in unhealthy behaviors and live in unhealthy environments.

For the business community, the issues of health care quality, cost and access are critical. After numerous years of double-digit and near-double-digit increases, health insurance has quickly become a product that many people and companies find they can no longer afford. In addition, the cost of health care directly affects businesses' ability to create new jobs.

Therefore, CBIA asks this committee to reject **SB 1204, AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE**. CBIA strongly supports establishing a health insurance exchange in Connecticut in order to comply with the recently enacted Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. However, CBIA urges this committee to support a health insurance exchange that supports and strengthens our existing private market. This is imperative so that we not only stop shedding jobs, but actually reverse our existing job loss trend and begin growing Connecticut's workforce and our economy.

The legislature is already considering an exchange bill that does just that - **SB 921**. **SB 921** has already been approved by the Insurance Committee and we strongly urge you to support that legislation as the health insurance exchange vehicle and that you reject **SB 1204**.

Section 2(b)(4) of **SB 1204** is especially concerning since it says that anyone with genuine experience in the health insurance field is barred from serving on the exchange's board. Foregoing the benefit of such expertise at any stage of the exchange's development (especially during its infancy) is simply bad public policy.

We urge you instead to support **SB 921**, which fosters and supports the private market, brings all stakeholders to the table and is based on the good work already performed by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). The NAIC's health insurance exchange model legislation served as the basis for **SB 921**.

Again, please reject **SB 1204** and support **SB 921**. Thank you for your consideration.