

TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE
INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
MARCH 1, 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 1084, AN ACT CONCERNING OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES FOR NONPREFERRED BRAND NAME DRUGS**. The business community and other stakeholders are calling for significant reforms to Connecticut's costly and inefficient health care system. As you consider the various proposals to reform the state's health care system, CBIA asks you to refrain from making the already high cost of health care even more unaffordable for the state's companies and residents.

In essence, by limiting copayments for nonpreferred brand name drugs, **SB 1084** will effectively shift those costs onto the rest of the health care system and all health care consumers. Neither Connecticut's businesses nor its residents can afford such an increase that would result from this cost-shift even in the best of times. And during our current economic turmoil, the higher costs that will result from this cost-shift may induce more employers and individuals to drop coverage altogether – further increasing the number of our state's uninsured.