



TESTIMONY OF
YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH SYSTEM
BEFORE THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 21, 2012

SB 425, An Act Concerning A Basic Health Program

Yale New Haven Health System (YNHHS), Connecticut's leading healthcare system with nearly 15,000 employees serving more than 89,000 inpatients and over one million outpatient visits per year, appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in **opposition to SB 425, An Act Concerning A Basic Health Program.**

Bridgeport, Greenwich and Yale-New Haven Hospitals, and their affiliated organizations, provide comprehensive, cost-effective, advanced patient care characterized by safety, quality and service. We offer our patients a range of healthcare services, from primary care to the most complex care available anywhere in the world. YNHHS operates under a shared governance model; each hospital has its own Board of Directors and there is a System Board of Directors. Bridgeport, Greenwich and Yale-New Haven Hospitals are committed members of their local communities and provide millions of dollars in free and charity care and community benefit activities, such as investments in novel education programs, Habitat for Humanity, workforce development, health education and screenings, school partnerships, and assistance to local nonprofit organizations.

YNHHS hospital affiliates provide care to nearly one quarter of the state's Medicaid enrollees and provide millions in free and uncompensated care to those who seek our high quality services and do not have an ability to pay for them. In addition to being our community's largest employers and significant economic engines, we are the ultimate safety net and provide care 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Every day, our staff cares for individuals and families who lack access to and coverage of medical, dental and behavioral health care. Our emergency departments are filled with individuals, many of whom have delayed treatment, or who do not have anywhere else to go for medical care. Many of these patients are covered by Medicaid and, while the coverage is superior, access is severely limited due to inadequate reimbursement.

The Basic Health Plan will essentially become the insurance plan for individuals with family incomes between 133 and 200 percent of the federal poverty level who are currently covered by Medicaid. As proposed in SB 425 the Basic Health Plan does not address the current issues faced by Medicaid clients and providers. It will not improve access to non-hospital services and does not seek to address the significant under funding of the program. Together with the Connecticut Hospital Association, we look forward to working with you to develop a health care system that helps improve access to high quality health care in the most appropriate setting, while making health insurance affordable to individuals, and slowing the overall cost. We urge you to **oppose SB 425** and take this opportunity to create a plan that 1) improves the care and value for patients, 2) materially reduces the cost shift to Connecticut businesses and workers, and 3) protects the healthcare safety net.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.