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Testimony in Support of SB 425

Good afternoon, Madame Chairpersons, and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Doreen E Ferreira I am an undergraduate student of social work at St. Joseph College in West Hartford and a resident of Hartford. I am in favor of SB 425, An Act Concerning a Basic Health Program.

As a student and a healthcare worker, I have known peers who have been uninsured because they earned near-poverty level wages. A single person earning about \$9.25 per hour, which is what some personal care attendants that I know make, makes less than the 200% poverty threshold of \$22, 340 for an individual. A person earning that amount would qualify for the State Basic Health Program. Since, most people will have to have health insurance in 2014, it is important that people earning so little have the most quality, affordable option available to them.

A four-year student has to purchase health insurance out of pocket or have it deducted from financial aid. This can be very costly for some students, too.

Home health aide workers too often are underpaid and cannot afford to purchase healthcare benefits for themselves and their families. If they had to purchase health insurance on the exchange, even with federal subsidies, it would probably be too expensive for a lot of us.

I am here as a mother, sister, student, and healthcare worker asking the committee to pass the **State Basic Health Program**. Health care is very essential and everyone needs to be able to afford it.