

CTChiro
Connecticut Chiropractic Association
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Statement of Chris Connaughty, D.C.
before the Human Services Committee
House Bill 6411
February 19, 2013

Senator Slossberg, Representative Abercrombie and members of the committee:

My name is Dr. Chris Connaughty. I am a Chiropractic Physician and I am testifying today in support of House Bill 6411, An Act Concerning Medicaid Coverage for Chiropractic Services.

I serve as the Legislative Committee Chair of the Connecticut Chiropractic Association, and am representing that organization today.

Very simply, Section 9 of last December's deficit reduction bill--House Bill 7001--imposed a new rule that the state could only fund Chiropractic services to the extent required by Federal law.

There was no public hearing on this issue. There was no discussion of it. Yet, because of the provision the Department of Social Services has now told us that we can no longer treat children in the HUSKY program.

We have been providing HUSKY services for many years. Since it is not a mandated service by the federal government, we now need to cease the treatment of our patients.

Last December's provision is simply unfair and restricts the state's ability to adapt to circumstances. House Bill 6411 would reverse last December's action and thus make Chiropractic an option for HUSKY recipients.

Several of my colleagues will tell you of the health benefits of Chiropractic for children but let me reiterate a few points:

Chiropractic physicians clearly possess more education and clinical skills in the area of musculoskeletal diagnosis and treatment compared to general medical physicians and physical therapists.

If Chiropractic is not available to HUSKY enrollees, young patients will have nowhere to turn except to general medicine. This will not result in dollars saved.

A limited or complete loss of chiropractic benefits will result in a shift toward increased payment for traditional care with its inherent higher costs for treatment, diagnostics and the risks associated with prescriptions and invasive procedures.

Given the fact that our society, especially the young, is already overmedicated, this policy may be a move in the wrong direction.

I would like to ask that you pass this bill because the state should have the option of using us again in programs like HUSKY.

We understand the Governor's proposed budget assumes "savings" from the elimination of Chiropractic in HUSKY. We will be testifying next Friday at the public hearing portion of the Department of Social Services' budget. We will discuss the idea that there will be a higher cost—not a lower cost—if Chiropractic is excluded as a treatment option.

For these reasons, we support House Bill 6411 and urge your favorable action on it.

Thank you.