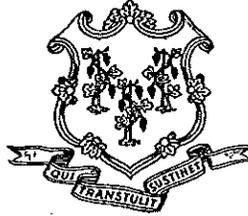


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Good afternoon Senator Crisco, Representative Megna and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee. I am here to testify in support of HB 6320, AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE OF ORALLY AND INTRAVENOUSLY ADMINISTERED MEDICATIONS, SB 810, AN ACT REQUIRING THE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT TO CONSULT WITH THE CONNECTICUT HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE FOR RATES OR AMOUNTS FOR HEALTH PLANS OFFERED THROUGH SAID EXCHANGE, HB 6321, AN ACT REQUIRING CERTAIN DISCLOSURES FOR LONG-TERM CARE POLICIES, and SB 808, AN ACT REQUIRING PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CERTAIN LONG-TERM CARE POLICY RATE INCREASE REQUESTS.

First, I wanted to let the committee know that I received an answer to my inquiry to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as to whether the provisions of SB 599 would be interpreted as a mandate after 12/31/2011. They

would not be considered a mandate at all, but rather a part of the insurance appeals process over which the state has jurisdiction. I have made a similar inquiry regarding HB 6320, and I will share that answer when I receive it as well.

SB 6320, AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE OF ORALLY AND INTRAVENOUSLY ADMINISTERED MEDICATIONS would create greater equity in our healthcare system by extending to disabling or life-threatening chronic disease patients protections that we extended to cancer patients three years ago. In 2010, the Connecticut General Assembly passed PA 10-63, AN ACT CONCERNING ORAL CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENTS which addressed the fact that many current therapies can include oral rather than intravenous chemotherapy. Unfortunately, this act applied only to cancer therapy and there are a number of other diseases that are now best treated with these types of medication. The oral medications can include biologics/biopharmaceuticals which have revolutionized care for some diseases and have offered many patients literally a new lease on life. However, these drugs tend to be extraordinarily expensive. Many of the drugs come in pill form and thus are covered as prescription drugs rather than as medical expenses. Many health plans would cover 100% of an IV infusion but only a percentage of a prescription drug. Thus, if the biologic/biopharmaceutical cost was \$5000 per month and the patient had a plan that paid 80% of prescription drug costs, that patient would have to pay \$12,000 per year out of pocket, while the out of pocket cost if the procedure was an IV infusion would be \$0. This seems an absurd result since oral drugs would seem to save the health system time as well as money. These new drugs are making many diseases manageable but it would

appear that the practice of medicine and our healthcare system have not caught up with the power and convenience of these new drugs.

SB 810, AN ACT REQUIRING THE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT TO CONSULT WITH THE CONNECTICUT HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE FOR RATES OR AMOUNTS FOR HEALTH PLANS OFFERED THROUGH SAID EXCHANGE, would require that the Connecticut Department of Insurance consult with the Health Insurance Exchange when considering rate approval for any plans that will be offered through the Exchange. This requirement is simply common sense; the Exchange will have detailed knowledge about its plans that will be useful to the Department of Insurance in its rate setting duties.

HB 6321, AN ACT REQUIRING CERTAIN DISCLOSURES FOR LONG-TERM CARE POLICIES would create much needed protections for purchasers of long term care insurance. Buyers must be made aware that these policies may be subject to rate increases; informing buyers of the ten year history of rate increases on the product would give these buyers the information they need to make an educated choice in a complicated market.

SB 808, AN ACT REQUIRING PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CERTAIN LONG-TERM CARE POLICY RATE INCREASE REQUESTS would require the Commissioner of the Department of Insurance to hold a symposium for public comment if a long term care insurer requests a rate increase above ten percent. This would allow the commissioner to better take into account the effect that the rate increase would have on consumers.

Thank you for addressing these important issues.

