

Testimony of Tom Swan, Executive Director of CCAG

Before the General Law Committee

In support of HB 5337 AAC FEES CHARGED FOR SERVICES PROVIDED AT A HOSPITAL-BASED FACILITIES

March 6, 2014

Senator Doyle, Representative Baram and other members of the General Law Committee my name is Tom Swan and I am the Executive Director of the CT Citizen Action Group (CCAG) with over 25,000 member families. I want to thank you for raising HB 5337 AAC FEES CHARGED FOR SERVICES PROVIDED AT A HOSPITAL-BASED FACILITIES and urge its passage. It is a basic consumer right to know issue.

Attorney General Jepsen has done a good job documenting the scope of the problem. Families facing health problems should not be surprised by hidden fees for services they receive.

I consider myself an informed consumer and have what is considered very good insurance coverage. I recently was diagnosed with a condition that called on me to see a hospital based specialist and to purchase some related equipment. It was at least implied to me that my insurance would cover it.

Several weeks later I began receiving a bill from a company I had never heard of for things that I was not sure what they were. I was not sure if this was a scam or if I needed to pay them. I made a series of phone calls and realized what they were for, but am concerned about how such fees could impact someone with more limited income and how the lack of up front disclosure could lead people to become victims of scams.

I know the Hospital Association has called for voluntary disclosure from its members after press reports on this problem, but that is not enough. We need legislation to protect consumers and I want to once again thank you for raising this bill today and urge its passage.