

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
March 6, 2014

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Testimony Supporting House Bill No. 5337

AN ACT CONCERNING FEES CHARGED FOR SERVICES PROVIDED AT HOSPITAL-BASED
FACILITIES

Senator Doyle, Representative Baram and distinguished members of the General Law Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of House Bill No. 5337, *An Act Concerning Fees Charged for Services Provided at Hospital-Based Facilities*.

By requiring that consumers be notified of the imposition of facility fees on top of the cost of the procedure prior to such procedures being performed, this bill represents an important first step toward achieving transparency with respect to provider billing. The charging of these additional facility fees (over and above the fee for the professional services rendered) has become an increasingly widespread practice that often catches the consumer off guard and will likely become even more prevalent with the expansion in the number of insured under the Affordable Care Act. I find the practice of charging facility fees to health care consumers – and the lack of information to consumers about their potential liabilities when accessing care – troubling. As Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, I am also concerned about the fiscal impact to the State of Connecticut of such fees on the thousands of state employees, retirees and their families who are impacted by this practice without their informed consent. This practice results in significant unanticipated costs to the State for the care we support on behalf of these individuals. While this bill does not prohibit these charges, it represents an important first step in ensuring consumers have the tools to make informed choices.

I have reviewed the testimony of Attorney General Jepsen and concur with his arguments supporting this bill and the substitute language he proposed in his testimony.

Again, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this very important bill. I respectfully request that the Committee support the bill

with the proposed amendments highlighted in the Attorney General's testimony and would be happy to discuss this topic at a later date if you so desire.