

"Oral health for all"



January 27, 2015

INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

Re: **CB-11 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE CONNECTICUT HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE TO NEGOTIATE PREMIUMS.**

Mary Moran Boudreau, Executive Director, Connecticut Oral Health Initiative

Senator Crisco, Representative Megna and other distinguished committee members, I want to thank you for this opportunity to address Committee Bill Number 11.

I request you consider including dental coverage in the negotiation for rates for plans offered through the exchange. I suggest that the words "and dental plans" be inserted in Section 1, Section 38a-1084, (24) following the words "qualified health plans" to read; "(24) Seek to include the most comprehensive health benefit plans that offer high quality benefits at the most affordable price in the exchange and negotiate premiums with health carriers offering or seeking to offer qualified health plans and dental plans through the exchange."

When passing this important legislation, it is necessary to include dental plans as they are essential to the health of our states residents. Oral health has shown to be a factor in relation to diabetes, heart disease, stroke, birth weight and other factors. One of the main contributors to pneumonia in older adults is poor dental health and the inability to chew food properly. We can all recognize that poor dental health, including the related pain, can affect lives – the way we eat, talk, appear, ability to attend school, go to work and more. The stand-alone plans offered by Access Health CT are not affordable and negotiation on the premiums is necessary.

I urge your support in the passage of this bill with the recognition of dental insurance plans needing negotiation of the premiums.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and your commitment to the health of all Connecticut residents. I may be reached at 860-246-2644 or maryb@ctoralhealth.org for further discussion.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Moran Boudreau".