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Testimony
Appropriations Committee
Governor's FY 2016 Budget

Submitted By: Erin E. Jones, Director of Government Affairs

MEDICAID COVERAGE IN CONNECTICUT

Medicaid provides an essential health care safety net for pregnant women, children, and families.

In Connecticut, children and their parents are eligible for Medicaid coverage up to 185% of the Federal Poverty Level.

GOVERNOR MALLOY'S BUDGET PROPOSES ELIMINATING MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR CERTAIN PARENTS

The Governor's proposed budget for FY 2016 eliminates Medicaid (HUSKY) for pregnant women and parents of children on HUSKY with incomes above 138% of the Federal Poverty Level (about \$33,000 for a family of four).

The Governor intends for these HUSKY parents to purchase commercial insurance through the Access Health CT (Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange), but researchers have found that many will be unable to afford insurance through the exchange.ⁱ Those who are able to purchase health care through the exchange will have to pay deductibles and co-pays that they did not pay for under Medicaid, which will create additional financial barriers to accessing health care.

IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING COVERAGE FOR PARENTS IN MEDICAID

Parental health care coverage is linked to fewer disruptions in coverage and improved continuity of care for children. Children with health insurance whose parents are insured are less likely to have unmet health care needs compared to insured children with uninsured parents. In addition, if parents and children both participate in the same health care coverage plan, with the same provider network, they are less likely to experience disruptions in continuity of care.

Therefore, the March of Dimes asks you to maintain Medicaid coverage for HUSKY parents with incomes about 138% of the Federal Poverty Level to ensure health care coverage for Connecticut families.

Please feel free to contact me for more information, questions or concerns,
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ⁱ"Consequences of Proposed Eligibility Reduction of HUSKYA Parents", Katherine London, MS, Robert Seifert, MPA and Rachel Gerson, JD MPH University of Massachusetts Medical School Center for Health Law and Economics, go to

<http://www.cthealth.org/news-publications/publications/health-policyadvocacy/consequences-of-proposed-eligibility-reduction-of-husky-a-parents>.