



# State of Connecticut

## Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

18-20 Trinity Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Tel. (860) 240-8330  
Fax (860) 240-0315  
lprac@cga.ct.gov  
www.cga.ct.gov/lprac

### Testimony Supporting HB 5536

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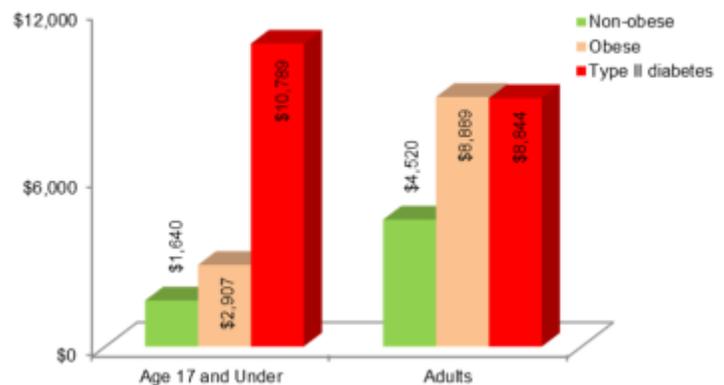
Orlando J. Rodriguez  
Associate Commission Analyst, Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

Public Health Committee, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Hartford, CT

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Orlando Rodriguez and I am an Associate Commission Analyst with the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC). LPRAC supports **HB 5536: AN ACT CONCERNING A DIABETES ACTION PLAN.**<sup>1</sup>

It is imperative that we reduce the high incidence of diabetes among Hispanic children, who have the **2<sup>nd</sup> highest** rate of obesity among racial/ethnic groups (grades 9-12) and who will account for 25 percent of Connecticut's children by 2020. There is also an added economic cost associated with obesity as a child with type II diabetes will incur an **additional \$9,150** in annual healthcare costs. Furthermore, 70 percent of overweight adolescents will become overweight adults. In Connecticut in 2003, diabetes cost \$1.7 billion in direct and indirect costs.

Annual Claims Based on Obesity Diagnosis



To reduce the incidence of childhood diabetes among Latinos, we must ensure that the state has implemented programs with proven efficacy to prevent and treat diabetes. HB 5536 does this by requiring several state agencies to collaborate on a comprehensive approach to reducing the incidence and cost of treating diabetes in Connecticut. This legislation is a good start to reducing the incidence of childhood diabetes among Hispanics.

LPRAC is grateful to this committee for its ongoing focus on the needs of Latino children throughout Connecticut. Our board has made it clear that improving the health of Hispanic children is a top priority for Latinos in Connecticut.

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the sources of information used in this testimony can be found in LPRAC's 2016 Legislative Policy Agenda at, [https://www.cga.ct.gov/lprac/docs/2016/LPRAC\\_2016Agenda\\_Web\\_08Jan2016.pdf](https://www.cga.ct.gov/lprac/docs/2016/LPRAC_2016Agenda_Web_08Jan2016.pdf)