



Community Health Center Association of Connecticut

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Testimony of

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*Regarding the Human Services Provisions
of Governor Malloy's Budget Proposal*
Appropriations Committee

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify about the Human Services provisions of Governor Malloy's budget proposal, which will impact hundreds of thousands of Connecticut residents.

On behalf of the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHCACT), and its fifteen member federally-qualified health centers, I offer comments on the following:

Block Granting of State Agencies: CHCACT strongly opposes the governor's proposal to block grant certain funding streams to state agencies, which would shift some of the responsibility of appropriating taxpayer money from the legislative branch to the executive branch. As this Committee knows, the legislature has direct accountability to its constituents, and hearings like these are a testament to the importance of public input in crafting state budgets. Please do not accept this proposal, and instead, allow the legislature to retain the responsibility of creating the state budget.

Reduction in funding to FQHCs: The State of Connecticut has been supportive of federally-qualified health centers (FQHCs), which, altogether, provide over 350,000 state residents with high-quality primary, dental and behavioral health care services. As you can see from the list at the bottom of this testimony, FQHCs provide care all across the state, in urban, rural and suburban areas. All of you on this Committee have health center patients in your districts.

In prior years, financial support from the State has come in the form of state grants from the Department of Public Health (DPH). Last year, the legislature shifted most of those funds to the Department of Social Services (DSS), in order to receive a federal match. (Approximately \$400,000 was retained at DPH, to be distributed as grants. The governor's budget proposal removes that funding for FY '17).

Unfortunately, Governor Malloy now proposes to reduce those DSS funds by half. By removing \$775,000 from the state budget, the pot of funds for FQHCs will be reduced from \$4 million to \$2 million. This cut leaves federal money on the table and, by reducing funding to FQHCs, it will negatively impact access to health care for Connecticut residents.

CHCACT applauds the governor for not recommending changes to eligibility or services in the HUSKY program. That program, which serves over 725,000 Connecticut residents, has demonstrated level – and, in some cases, declining – per member-per month costs, bucking national health trends. After lowering income limits this past summer – impacting over 18,000 low-income parents – I urge the Committee to sustain and support the continued success of HUSKY on behalf of Connecticut residents.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work on behalf of our great state.