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State of Connecticut

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Good afternoon Sen. Leone, Rep. Baram, and members of the General Law Committee. I would like to express my support for SB 309, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY VALUE-BASED PRICING OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS and SB 310, AN ACT REQUIRING KILL SWITCHES FOR SMARTPHONES

Unfortunately, the United States does not, for the most part, regulate pharmaceutical pricing. Most other developed countries do regulate these prices. While the state does not have the authority to set drug prices per se, it might be possible for the state, as a payor, to create a reimbursement scheme that takes value into consideration. There are several value based approaches, but in general, the price of a new drug would be limited by how much more effective it has been shown to be than existing standard treatment. It will be nearly impossible to bend the cost curve in healthcare without addressing the ever increasing costs of prescription drugs. I also would encourage this task force to work with Bailit Health which is the vendor chosen by the Healthcare Cabinet to perform the costs containment study required in PA 15-146.

It has been well documented that theft of smartphones has become a major problem across the country. SB 310 would require reasonable consumer protection in this matter. According to the Federal Communications Commission, smartphone thefts now account for 30 to 40 percent of robberies in many major cities across the country. According to Consumer Reports, approximately 3.1 million Americans were victims of smart phone theft in 2013. Requiring that smart phones have a kill switch appears to be an effective deterrent to the theft of these phones and all the personal data they contain. Some phone makers have voluntarily added kill switches while others have not. We should require kill switches in all smart phones sold in Connecticut. This would protect consumers and level the playing field so that the cost is not borne solely by the companies that voluntarily offer this extraordinarily important consumer protection.

Thank you for raising this important legislation.