

To: Public Health Committee – CT Legislature

From: Neal Lustig, MPH, Director of Health , Pomperaug Health District

Re: H.B. 5266, AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR DIABETES PREVENTION AND SELF-MANAGEMENT EDUCATION SERVICES.

As Director of Health for the Pomperaug Health District, serving Southbury, Woodbury and Oxford, CT I support H.B. 5266 – An Act concerning Medicaid Coverage for Diabetes Prevention and Self-Management Programs. My Health District is an active provide of Diabetes Self Management Programs (DSMP) having completed 12 of these six week evidenced based programs in our District over the past three years. Diabetes affects approximately 9.6% of the general CT Population with higher percentages in older folks and certain minority/ethnic groups. This incidence rate is confirmed by our just completed Community Health Assessment Survey and supported by the 2015 CT Wellness Survey. The evidenced based program, DSMP, is a six week behavioral modification focused plan, that is held in group of between 10 and 16 persons. They are community focused and either directed by Community Health Workers or Health District Staff. It is estimated that diabetes and pre-diabetes conditions result in \$3 billion in annual medical costs in CT. With nearly 25% of the total CT population covered by CT Medicaid, community based programs, evidenced based and research tested, are essential in both reducing health care costs and severity of disease. Unfortunately it is very difficult, if not impossible to bill CT Medicaid for these services for a multitude of reasons. Be advised that the Pomperaug Health District and many other Local Health Departments, among other service providers, that are now sponsoring these programs. We are operating under a “state license” acquired by the CT Agency on Aging and its’ sub-groups, i.e. the Western Ct Area on Aging (WCAAA). My Professional Staff and Community Health Workers have gone thru an extensive 6 day training, provided by the state of CT in preparation for this work. With the approval of this legislation this important work can continue at a relatively low cost to taxpayers. Once again I very much support this legislation as an excellent method to reduce the incidence of this disease and save the State of CT Medicaid significant financial resources.