



House Bill 5266 – Medicaid Coverage for Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) and the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)

Thank you Chairman Ritter, Chairwoman Gerratana, and Committee Members. My name is Trish Comrie-Scheer and I am a registered dietitian, a certified diabetes educator, the President of the Connecticut Alliance of Diabetes Educators (CADE), and lastly a person living a life with type 1 diabetes.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 5266. Given the short timeline, I was unable to make accommodations in my travel schedule to be present, but would have otherwise very much enjoyed the opportunity to speak with all of you on behalf of CADE, and also as a representative of our community here in CT with diabetes.

Diabetes impacts 70,000 Medicaid recipients here in CT and is a serious, chronic condition that is largely managed by the people with diabetes themselves. Because of the self-management nature of the disease, diabetes self-management education (DSME) is critical to sustaining health and preventing complications. Poorly controlled diabetes can lead to disabling complications including heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, nerve damage, amputations, and death. In 2012 the annual cost of prediabetes and diabetes resulted in \$3 billion in annual medical costs in CT, while indirect costs resulting from lost productivity contributed another \$1 billion annually. These numbers are staggering and by supporting House Bill 5266 you have the opportunity to make a difference, as DSME is proven to reduce health care costs and results in fewer hospitalizations.

From my personal experience living with type 1 diabetes, I simply cannot imagine how I would live a fulfilling and productive life without diabetes education and support. Because of strong knowledge, diabetes is manageable. Yet here in CT, our most vulnerable and ethnic minority population, are not receiving appropriate care. As you may know, CT Medicaid does not cover services for quality diabetes education that meets the American Diabetes Association and American Association of Diabetes Educators standards of care, which is why I implore you to please support House Bill 5266.

Kind Regards,

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