



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

INSURANCE DEPARTMENT

Insurance and Real Estate Committee Additional Testimony on House Bill No. 6887 March 20, 2017

House Bill No. 6887 An Act Expanding Coverage for Mental Health Care Services and Substance Abuse Services Provided by Certified Peer Counselors.

Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Ranking Member, and Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, the Insurance Department is submitting for the record additional testimony on **House Bill No. 6887 An Act Expanding Coverage for Mental Health Care Services and Substance Abuse Services.**

The Department's additional testimony recognizes the intent of the Committee Bill and subsequent substitute language to require health insurers to cover peer support services for mental health and substance abuse services. The Department's initial testimony for the February 16, 2017 Public Hearing only speak to the intent of the Proposed Bill.

Mandating that peer support services be provided, not subject to medical necessity, would constitute a new mandate for which the state would need to defray the costs pursuant to the Affordable Care Act.

Under the federal Affordable Care Act, states were required to establish Essential Health Benefits (EHBs) health plans that would be marketed in and out of state exchanges. On February 25, 2013, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued final rule that recognized only those mandated benefits enacted before December 31, 2011 to be part of the EHBs. Any benefits mandated after that date would become the financial liability of the state. As a result, the state would be required to make payment to the enrollee or insurance carrier to defray the cost of any new benefits specific to care, treatment and services which are enacted this session.

The Department thanks the members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony on H.B. 6887.

About the Connecticut Insurance Department: The mission of the Connecticut Insurance Department is to protect consumers through regulation of the industry, outreach, education and advocacy. The Department recovers an average of more than \$4 million yearly on behalf of consumers and regulates the industry by ensuring carriers adhere to state insurance laws and regulations and are financially solvent to pay claims. The Department's annual budget is funded through assessments from the insurance industry. For every dollar of direct expense, the Department brings in about \$7.45 to the state in revenues. Each year, the Department returns more than \$215 million in assessments, fees and penalties to the state's General Fund.