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H.B. 6237, AN ACT ADOPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE DIABETES ADVISORY COUNCIL
Public Health Committee
February 17, 2017

Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg, and members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is John Cattelan and I am here today on behalf of the Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs. The Alliance represents 21 YMCAs across the state of Connecticut. I'm here today to urge the members of this committee to support H.B. 6237, An Act Adopting the Recommendations of the Diabetes Advisory Council.

However, I would request the Committee include the language from H.B. 6245, An Act Adopting Certain recommendations of the Diabetes Advisory Council in this bill. While we support the idea of diabetes self-management education, we don't believe this conversation should take place without first trying to prevent diabetes. H.B. 6245 requires coverage by commercial, state employee and Medicaid health plans for diabetes prevention programs, such as the Ys Diabetes Prevention Program.

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I like to share with members of the committee some of the long term financial and public health implications of not addressing the diabetes as a major health problem in Connecticut.

- Federal officials said that Medicare saved \$2,650 for each person enrolled in the Ys diabetes prevention program during a 15 month period. That was more than enough to cover the costs of the program. Beneficiaries in the program lost about 5 percent of their body weight, which decreases the risk of future diabetes.
- In 2012, diabetes and prediabetes resulted in \$3 billion in annual medical costs in Connecticut. (Complications can result in tens of thousands of dollars in medical expenses for one individual.) Indirect costs from lost productivity due to diabetes result in an additional \$1 billion in annual expenses.
- According to the 2015 Connecticut Diabetes Statistics, diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in Connecticut where 690 deaths were attributed to diabetes as the underlying cause.
- About 186,000 adults in Connecticut have been diagnosed with diabetes, and 93,000 adults are estimated to have undiagnosed prediabetes. Older adults, low-income adults, and racial and ethnic minorities have the highest rates of

diagnosed diabetes. The chief risk factor for diabetes is obesity. An estimated 25% of Connecticut's adults are obese.