



**Testimony of John Brady, RN**  
Executive Vice President, AFT Connecticut

Insurance and Real Estate Committee  
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Good afternoon. My name is John Brady. I am a Registered Nurse and Executive Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a union of 30,000 members in education, healthcare, and public service.

The recent dispute between Anthem, Inc. and Hartford HealthCare is a symptom of a greater problem. As insurance corporations and Healthcare networks have merged and become larger and larger, the patient has been left behind. Now, when large insurance and healthcare corporations cannot come to an agreement on contracts, the patient is used as a pawn in a high stakes negotiation game.

Doctors take an oath to “do no harm,” nurses dedicate their lives to care of their patients, but unfortunately, health corporations do not seem to share these ethical standards.

And people get hurt.

AFT Connecticut reached out to our members to update them on the dispute and what we were doing to try to help resolve it. We received back, without solicitation, scores of personal stories of the anxiety and uncertainty that this dispute has caused them.

What infuriates me most is that the executives at the top of these two corporations draw salaries in the millions of dollars. At the same time, they both benefit from the generosity of taxpayers. Insurance companies receive tax incentives to maintain their offices in state. Healthcare networks receive relief from property taxes and Medicaid and Medicare payments.

This corporate welfare should not come without strings and it should certainly not continue if the very patients they are responsible for serving become victims.

It is clear that they will not self-regulate so that the patient is done no harm. It remains for the residents of the state to become the regulators.

A system of binding arbitration in the event that a contract dispute cannot be settled would go a long way toward insurance companies and non-health networks putting patients before profits.

We recognize the need in similar situations already. That is why teachers and state workers enter into arbitration with their employers in contract disputes — a system that protects the students they educate and the public they serve. This is no different.

Thank you for your time.