

**Testimony before the Human Services Committee**  
**February 28, 2019**  
**HB 7166 An Act Concerning Non-Emergency Medical Transportation for**  
**Medicaid Beneficiaries**  
**Orest Demkowych**

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Rep. Abercrombie and members of the Human Services Committee.

My name is Orest Demkowich and I am a register voter. I am here to speak about *HB 7166 An Act Concerning Non-Emergency Medical Transportation for Medicaid Beneficiaries* and the constant obstacles for getting a ride out of the mileage area.

Prior to November 9, 2018, I was told by Veyo Transportation that I needed 15 business days to process a request for transportation outside the mileage area. On November 9<sup>th</sup> the request was faxed from UConn Health Center in Farmington by a woman employed by UConn named Marlana #860-679-6649 (this is her direct number). I made the next available appointment on Monday, January 14, 2019 with Veyo Transportation. I got a confirmation number from Veyo and said Veyo had enough time to process this request and asked repeatedly "would I get a ride"? I never got a definitive answer from the person I spoke to. On January 17, 2019, I was waiting for my scheduled ride for 9:30 AM and at 9:50 AM I called Veyo to ask where my ride was, they said that my ride was denied. The reason was that I did not have health insurance and that they never got the original request for a ride. At this time I became aware that Veyo claims that 10 rides were comped but only 2 were really comps. I asked to speak to a supervisor, was put on hold, and knew that I would be on hold for quite some time. While on hold, I put Veyo on hold, called Marlana at UConn directly and asked her to tell me exactly what day that she faxed the request. The request was faxed November 9, 2018 and she had gotten a confirmation number. She also said she would fax it today once again. I transferred my call back to Veyo and I was still on hold. I was quite upset; I had done everything that Veyo needed to process this request. I felt that I was lied to by Veyo and discouraged from making other appointments with great anxiety.

I called my state rep. Susan Johnson. She told me that, because I had moved to Ashford, my state rep. was now Pat Wilson Pheanious. Rep. Johnson listened to my situation, and gave me Rep Wilson-Pheanious's phone number and said to call her aide who would get the message faster. I called the aide and explained my situation and I said if Veyo tries to tell you that I don't have insurance I can confirm that I have insurance and I have a confirmation letter I got from DSS dated December 28, 2018. My insurance never lapsed. 2 hours went by. I got a call from Veyo saying that I had insurance and that my rides were good for a whole year. The also said the woman from UConn got the wrong fax number. I told Veyo that was impossible since she got a confirmation for the fax. The woman from Veyo told me that the employees would be retrained about the insurance. That same day, January 17, 2019, I got a letter from Dave Coppock, a Veyo employee, saying that I did not have insurance. The procedure for the Veyo is, as I told Veyo, that when Veyo gets a request for a trip outside the mileage area their procedure is to forward it to DSS for approval then it goes back to Veyo. DSS knows that I had insurance on November 9, 2018 as well as on December 28, 2018 and on January 14, 2019 when I requested a ride. Therefore, I believe that Veyo blatantly lied to me when they said I had no insurance. I will fax the renewal letter, the confirmation letter and the denial letter stating that I did not have insurance. Please remember that my insurance never lapsed and that DSS knew I had insurance. This, I believe was another attempt to discourage people for medical transportation rides by Veyo in effect causing me and possibly others great distress and anxiety. Thank you.

Orest Demkowych