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Promoting Public Health in Connecticut since 1916

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CPHA is an affiliate of the
American Public Health
Association.

Testimony in Support of HB 5627

An Act Extending the Period a Child, Stepchild or Other Dependent Child May Retain
Dental Insurance Coverage Under a Parent's Health Insurance Policy
Insurance and Real Estate Committee, March 3, 2019

Dear Senator Lesser, Representative Scanlon, and members of the Insurance and Real Estate
Committee,

On behalf of the Connecticut Public Health Association (CPHA), I am pleased to submit this
testimony **in support of HB 5627**. CPHA's mission is to provide leadership on health
promotion and disease prevention through communication, advocacy, education, research,
and professional and workforce development.

This bill will provide continuity of care for young adults until they are able to assume
individual coverage. Continuous care is crucial for managing chronic health conditions like
tooth decay. At present, the Affordable Care Act does not include dental insurance coverage
for young adults over age 19.

WHY IS CONTINUITY OF DENTAL CARE SO IMPORTANT?

- Eighty-two percent (82%) of U.S. adults, aged 20-34, have tooth decay, and 27%
have untreated cavities, according to the Centers for Disease Control.¹
- Seeking dental care is strongly associated with having dental benefits. People who
lack coverage are three times more likely to see a dentist only when they have a
problem rather than for preventive care.²
- Preventive care is more cost-effective in reducing disease burden and associated
expenditures.³
- A lack of dental care leads to costly emergency room visits and temporary
solutions.⁴

Good oral health is essential to staying healthy. Dental decay is a disease which, if left
untreated, can cause severe health issues and can also negatively impact young people's
ability to retain employment and maintain their self-esteem. HB 5627 recognizes that oral
health care is a part of an individual's overall well-being and should be provided alongside
existing health coverage.

CPHA urges you to support this very important measure to ensure continuity of dental care
for young adults. Thank you for considering this bill.

Roberta R. Friedman, ScM
Chair, Advocacy Committee, CPHA

¹ See <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db197.htm>

² See http://www.ada.org/en/~media/ADA/Publications/ADA%20News/Files/full_report

³ See https://www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/publications/resources/burdenbook/pdfs/CDHP_policy_brief.pdf

⁴ See https://www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/publications/resources/burdenbook/pdfs/CDHP_policy_brief.pdf