



# Community Health Center Association of Connecticut

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Testimony of

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Supporting

HB 5627: *An Act Extending the Period a Child, Step-Child, or Other Dependent Child  
May Retain Dental Insurance Coverage Under a Parent's Health Insurance Policy*

Insurance & Real Estate Committee

March 5, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 5627: An Act Extending the Period a Child, Step-Child, or Other Dependent Child May Retain Dental Insurance Coverage Under a Parent's Health Insurance Policy.

On behalf of the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHCACT), and its sixteen member federally-qualified health centers, I want to thank the Committee for raising this bill on this critical issue. Connecticut's federally-qualified health centers serve almost 400,000 people each year, providing medical, behavioral health and dental care in over 100 locations across the state. Almost all of the health centers offer dental on-site; several also offer dental throughout their communities, either on a van or through portable equipment. In 2016, health centers provided over 264,000 dental visits across the state.

**CHCACT supports this bill**, which will allow children to retain dental coverage on their parents' insurance policies until age 26. This bill is the logical extension of the current policy, which allows young adults to retain medical coverage on their parents' plans. As a reminder, Connecticut adopted the policy extending health insurance coverage to age 26 in 2007; it was so successful that Congress borrowed the idea and incorporated it into the Affordable Care Act.

Growing evidence supports the fact that oral health and overall health are closely linked. For example, children with dental coverage and proper oral health have been shown to have higher school attendance rates, better grades, and better overall health. Oral health care is connected to diabetes, pregnancy outcomes, cardiovascular disease, and other conditions. Yet, unlike medical coverage, oral health coverage ends for most young adults around age 23 or when they graduate college.

This bill is a common sense solution, at no cost to the state, for improving health outcomes for young Connecticut residents. It will help keep healthy young adults in the health care system, a plus for insurance companies; it will provide peace of mind for parents looking to keep their children healthy; and, it will make it easier and more cost-effective to serve the health needs of thousands of young adults in our state.

I ask that you please support this bill, which is another step in the right direction for health care in Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work on behalf of our great state. Please feel free to reach out with any questions: [dpolun@chcact.org](mailto:dpolun@chcact.org) or 860.667.7820.