



Connecticut Chapter

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Testimony on

Raised S.B. No. 842 AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTH CARE IN CONNECTICUT.

Distinguished Chairpersons of the Insurance Committee, Sen. Matthew Lesser, Rep. Kerry Wood, Ranking Members Sen. Tony Hwang and Rep. Cara Pavalock-D'Amato, and Honorable Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee:

My name is Benjamin Cherry; I am a board-certified Internist practicing in West Haven, CT and current Health and Public Policy Co-Chair for the Connecticut chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP). ACP provides advocacy, practice tools, clinical guidance, and continuing education resources for Internal Medicine, a discipline focused on the care of adults emphasizing use of the best medical science and encompassing Primary Care, Hospital Medicine, and the many medical specialties such as Cardiology, Gastroenterology, etc. I write to you on behalf of our chapter to express our support for Raised S.B. No. 842.

The ACP strongly supports measures that improve patient health and medical system efficiency by promoting expanded access to coverage and care. Many parts of the existing health care system, both here in Connecticut and nationwide, are inefficient and inaccessible to many. As a state and country, we need to take steps toward the goal of universal, affordable health coverage.

Raised S.B. 842 will help Connecticut achieve broader health care coverage, better access to care providers, and improved outcomes for Connecticut residents without the significant overhaul of our existing systems that would result from immediately transitioning to a single-payer approach.

At present, people with comprehensive employer-sponsored insurance are ineligible for subsidized marketplace-based coverage under the ACA. This means most non-elderly Connecticut residents are restricted to the health insurance plan offered by their employer – which may not meet all of their specific needs – or unsubsidized individual coverage inside or outside of the health insurance exchange. A plan such as that outlined in Raised S.B. 842 would provide real choice for health coverage to those with few or undesirable private options.

One year ago, ACP launched its “Better is Possible” campaign under then-President Robert McLean, who practices here in Connecticut. That campaign includes a detailed policy framework that includes thoughtful, evidence-based support for why and how the United States should take bold steps to improve health care coverage and decrease costs to care. Connecticut need not, and should not, wait for action at the federal level to improve affordability, access to care, and improved outcomes for our residents when Raised S.B. 842 provides a viable option to do it now.

Respectfully,

Benjamin Cherry, MD, FACP, Health and Public Policy Co-Chair, ACP Connecticut Chapter
Anthony Yoder, DO, MPH, FACP, Health and Public Policy Co-Chair, ACP Connecticut Chapter
Rebecca Andrews, MS, MD, FACP *and* Governor, ACP Connecticut Chapter