

**Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Tuesday, February 9**

Senate Bill 842: An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Health Care in Connecticut - Support

My name is Thomas Connolly and I would like to thank the committee chairs and members of the committee for agreeing to a public hearing on this important Public Option for Health Insurance for CT residents, Senate Bill 842.

For a moment I would like you to think about if you received an email tonight when you go home that CT has cancelled your health insurance for you and your family. What would you do? Where would you go to receive health care? Where would your family go? Say you found a private health insurance option. Could you afford it? Maybe some of you could easily afford it. But what if you could not afford it?

You might be sitting there saying in your head that this will never happen to you because you are one of the lucky ones who qualify for the CT state health care plan. And you would be right!

My daughter was not so lucky! She worked for a large senior travel agency when COVID hit. She has just received a promotion to supervisor to assist with complaints. At first, she was furloughed with insurance. Then one late Friday afternoon she got that email. You are terminated and your health insurance has been canceled.

She said she was shocked; she cried and did not know what to do. When she called, I said we will start looking around for catastrophic health care for her. You may know what that is. Something like a \$10,000 deductible before it kicks in. A person will go into debt but if you can get it that will cap large medical bills at \$10,000.

A story like hers has been repeated over and over again, even before the pandemic. Now, more than ever we need an affordable public option for CT residents.

Health care is not a want. I want a brand-new car. I want a second home on the shore in CT. I want a yacht so I can go to Martha's Vineyard or maybe a trip to the Caribbean.

No, health care is not a *want*. It is a *need*. Human needs include food, clothing, housing and, yes, **health care**. It is a basic human right! To have millions of Americans denied health care is criminal, and it should not be tolerated, especially during a pandemic.

Feb. is Black History Month. I will end with a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King.
"Of all the inequalities that exist, the injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhuman."

Thomas Connolly
CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Council 400 Member