

Testimony for SB 842 - An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Health Care In Connecticut

My name is Janet Epstein and I live in Trumbull, Connecticut. For 35 years I was a hospital social worker and, more recently, a volunteer at Make-A-Wish CT and the VA Medical Center in West Haven. I support S.B. 842: An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Health Care In Connecticut because improving the health and well-being of our CT residents is the right thing to do.

I have been an advocate for people with acute and chronic illness, a patient, a parent and a caregiver for people with health problems and, for a time, a person who was unable to secure private health insurance due to pre-existing conditions.

Having spent months applying unsuccessfully for insurance, in the days when pre-existing conditions excluded coverage, I know the fear and acute anxiety that worry about the potentially devastating consequences of one single health crisis creates.

From professional experience I have seen the worry, confusion and poor health that people experience when they are uninsured, people who have great difficulty negotiating our complex health care and insurance systems, working folks who struggle to make ends meet by, for example, non-adherence to treatment plans and people on the fringes of our communities, all of whom need affordable, reliable, consistent and good quality health care.

Senator Saud Anwar has reported on the evidence of the systemic inequities in our communities* and others have written about how we might address this**.

If we want to treat each other as we wish to be treated, it is essential that we pass S.B. 842 to expand high-quality, dependable, and affordable health care through new public health insurance plans.

With gratitude for your consideration,
Janet Epstein, MA, LMSW
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* <http://www.senatedems.ct.gov/anwar-news/3282-anwar-200615#sthash.vERpXDh0.dpbs>

**<https://debeaumont.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HIP-BCHC-Health-Equity-Lens-Tool-12-20202.pdf>