

Dear Members of Insurance and Real Estate of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Patricia Lewis, I am a resident of Branford, CT. Currently, I am pursuing a PhD in Sociology and have a background in public health, having obtained an MPH from Emory University in Atlanta. I support S.B. 842: An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Health Care In Connecticut.

S.B. 842 will make health care equitable, dependable, and affordable by creating new public options for health insurance in our state.

This issue is important for me as a mother to an infant, a daughter to an underinsured adult, a researcher studying health inequalities, and a concerned resident of Connecticut. I am privileged to have excellent health coverage through my husband's insurance (Tricare), but I know so many Connecticut residents who have limited coverage or not coverage at all. My mother is one such resident, working multiple part time jobs and unable to access quality healthcare. It is my hope that Connecticut expands a public option to all of its residents so individuals like my mother can obtain high quality health coverage.

It's critical that we expand health care coverage and make dependable health care more affordable in the face of a deadly pandemic, especially with so many workers losing their jobs and health coverage. Health coverage for all means my daughter would go to daycare with kids whose families can get adequate healthcare. Health coverage for all would mean my mother would not have to skip vital health appointments. Health coverage for all would mean my family would not need to worry about where to turn to for healthcare if my husband were to lose his job.

More than just the personal benefits families like mine would see, making health care more affordable would be good for our economy in Connecticut. Expanding access and lowering costs puts more money in the pockets of working families, empowers workers to seek better job opportunities, levels the playing field for small businesses and strengthens our economy by keeping our workers healthier and more productive. A public option would lower costs for everyone. When people without insurance cannot pay for their care, hospitals and insurance companies pass the cost along to the rest of us. This proposal ensures that people have affordable health insurance and are able to get the medical treatment they need, which will bring down costs for everyone.

I urge the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers to support S.B. 842 this session to expand high-quality, dependable, and affordable health care by creating new public options for health insurance.

Thank you for your time,

*Patricia Lewis, MSW MPH
Resident of Branford, CT*