

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 842 (Session Year 2021) –
“An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Health Care in Connecticut”

From:

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To:

Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee -- Chairs Lesser and Wood, Vice Chairs Anwar and Comey

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this very important bill. Although I am privileged to have decent health coverage through my husband's current employer, I have many friends who do not enjoy this same privilege. These friends either have limited coverage or, worse yet, no coverage at all through their jobs. Some of those friends are self-employed. Others work multiple part time jobs, adding up to more than 40 hours a week of gainful employment, yet are still not eligible through their employers for affordable health care benefits. And a number of my friends have recently lost employment during this pandemic or have seen a reduction in hours and benefits. I fully realize that my family could be in this same situation should my husband suddenly lose his job or become unable to work.

I am aware that even before the pandemic started, 51% of Connecticut residents struggled to afford health care. And 43% of Connecticut adults reported foregoing or delaying medical care because of the overwhelming costs. This ongoing problem manifests in a less healthy workforce and in a less prosperous overall economy. I am sure that the situation has worsened since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as thousands of families have lost critical health care coverage in just this past year.

Expanding the public option makes so much sense, especially in these critical times. It would create affordable and portable health care coverage

options for those that are disadvantaged by our current system (such as employees of small businesses and non-profit organizations, undocumented families, self-employed individuals, and those whose work status is unstable or in flux due to the pandemic). A healthy population is necessary in order to have the thriving economy we all desire.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie McFadden