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Autumn Lake Healthcare
SEIU 1199NE
Before the Insurance and
Real Estate Committee

In Support of SB 842: AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTHCARE IN CONNECTICUT

Good Afternoon Senator Lesser, Representative Wood, and members of the Insurance and Real Estate committee. My name is Betty Stakely and I live and work in Waterbury, CT. I have worked as a CNA at Autumn Lake at Bucks Hill in Waterbury for 28 years. I am here today to testify in support of SB 842.

Working as a CNA has been my life's calling. I love taking care of the elderly, and feel truly fulfilled knowing I help to give them a good quality of life. I call my residents my babies. Often times our residents can't take care of themselves and so I care for them. Some of our residents do not have families and so we are their families.

While I do truly love the work I do, I do not love the health insurance offered to me through my job. My health insurance is expensive, yet doesn't cover the important medications that I need. For instance, I live with rheumatoid arthritis and require an injection of Humira every two weeks. This injection is not covered by my insurance and would cost \$2,300 every two weeks. I need these injections to work and to survive. I am fortunate because I have been able to have my Humira injections paid for through a program called My Abbie Assist. The only issue with this program is that there are a limited number of people who can participate and I have to re-apply every year to participate. Every year I worry I will not be eligible and will be forced to pay the \$2,300 every two weeks. How will I survive then?

I've of course looked for other insurance that would cover these injections. I earn too much money to qualify for Husky and cannot afford the outrageous out of pocket costs of other private health insurance plans. Between the high premiums and the backbreaking deductibles, these plans are just not realistic.

If Connecticut had a public option, I could access the life sustaining medication I need without the stress and anxiety. I would be able to see my doctor, the dentist, or other healthcare professionals to participate in preventative healthcare practices. I would be able to save money, and live with peace of mind knowing it is within my power and budget to care for myself. There are thousands of people like me in the state who need your help. Please support SB 842.

Thank you for your time.