



**Testimony in Support of
House Bill 6175: An Act Concerning A Strategic Plan To Ensure Continued Access To Affordable
And Comprehensive Health Care Coverage
Submitted by Frances G. Padilla, President
Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut
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I am here to discuss House Bill 6175. We are all aware of the threats to health care developing in Washington, DC, and specifically the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, Women's Health, and Medicare. This bill is triggered by the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, if that occurs. While this is important, it is more important to do all we can as a state to prevent repeal of the ACA entirely. ACA repeal threatens our health care, our state budget, and, mostly critically, our health.

The Urban Institute released data showing that as many as 248,000 Connecticut residents would lose coverage. There would be \$391 million in lost subsidies and \$866 million in lost federal Medicaid funding. When the so-called "donut hole" widens again, Medicare participants will have to pay more out of pocket for drugs, the fastest growing health expense. There will be significant budgetary impact on the state government and on Connecticut hospitals. If barred from Medicaid, 30,000 Planned Parenthood patients stand to lose preventive reproductive health care.

By requiring the Office of Policy and Management to develop a plan to keep the same people insured post-ACA repeal as are insured now, we send a strong message to Connecticut residents that we will stand by them. The fact that the Committee has introduced this bill shows that Connecticut doesn't want to go backwards on the progress we've made in health care coverage. But, with the \$1.4 billion budget deficit you are already trying to close, it is unrealistic to think Connecticut will be able to replace the additional \$1.2 billion hole the ACA repeal will create.

Therefore, I implore the state legislature to do everything in your power to prevent the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. It was always understood as being in need of fixing. This is what you should call for – Keep & Fix. The current ideas floating around on replacement – whether the Ryan plan, the Cassidy-Collins plan, the Hatch plan or the Cruz plan – don't fundamentally fix the issues of cost, access and quality. In some cases, they exacerbate the problems we have today.

All of us know that the political power base has shifted from Democrats to Republicans. We know that Republicans in Congress may be more receptive to what they hear from their counterparts in state legislatures. Without meaning to appear partisan, I implore you to consider how influential the Connecticut Republican voice will be in Washington. The most important message is that we are all in this together, that everyone will be affected and that there is no way Connecticut will be able to recover fiscally from the loss of the Affordable Care Act. Fix it yes, repeal it no. Keep and Fix.

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut's mission is to serve as a catalyst that engages residents and communities in shaping a democratic health system that provides universal access to quality, affordable health care and promotes health in Connecticut. We believe that health care is a fundamental right and that our work is part of a broader movement for social and economic justice.