



UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

**Testimony In Support Of
House Bill 6938: An Act Concerning the Delivery of Quality Health Care
and Modernization of Health Care Facilities
Submitted by Frances G. Padilla, President
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Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut (UHCF) is an independent, nonprofit foundation working to shape our state's health care system to provide quality, affordable care and promote good health for all state residents.

We support HB 6938: An Act Concerning the Delivery of Quality Health Care and Modernization of Health Care Facilities.

The bill has a laudable goal, to improve access to capital via the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) and the Commission of Economic and Community Development (CECD) to underwrite acquisitions of medical equipment, update information technology, and renovate and build health care facilities. It also promotes group purchasing as another way to contain hospital costs.

We caution, however, that these solutions only partially address the overall problem of hospital financial viability and sustainability. A much broader, coordinated and statewide effort is needed to maintain the fiscal health of our hospitals while ensuring access to high-quality and affordable care that improves the health of state residents.

We support the examination of a solution for the Waterbury community, potentially via the State Innovation Model (SIM). SIM is funded by a \$45 million federal grant to improve the health of populations, improve the patient experience of care, and reduce per capita costs. It may be possible to align SIM's work to the particular needs of the Waterbury community. However, potential solutions should not be limited to SIM funding, but include a wider scope of possible solutions. In fact, what is happening in Waterbury is the symptom of a health care system that needs real reform--and we should go further in addressing our health care system.

Connecticut faces numerous challenges as it strives to address the need for access to high-quality, affordable health care that improves health for all state residents. The bills you are hearing today address many current challenges, but they are either short-term responses or do not coordinate and leverage existing efforts and investments to help us achieve long-term, sustainable solutions. Even worse, some bills may create unintended consequences.

I urge you to watch Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut's short video testimony and check out our complete written testimony and supporting resources on the web at: bit.ly/uhc-legislative

We can learn much from other states, such as Massachusetts, Vermont, Oregon and Washington—all of which have an "authority" of some sort that brings together health care planning and policymaking to best serve the health care interests of each state. These states are trying to look at the whole picture. We do not have a coordinated, cohesive approach in Connecticut and it is to the detriment of the families, businesses, communities and taxpayers of this state.

What we really need is an omnibus bill that incorporates components of this bill, Senate Bills 810 through 815, as well as Senate Bill 916—and possibly more ideas. We ask legislative leaders to work to craft a bill with input from stakeholders including consumers, providers and payers. We believe that such a bill can build on positive current work being done in Connecticut and help realize visionary, strategic and sustainable solutions to our shared health care challenges.