UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 370: An Act Concerning Health Care Provider Lists and Authorizing
Pregnancy as a Qualifying Event for Special Enrollment Periods
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We support Senate Bill 370: An Act Concerning Health Care Provider Lists and Authorizing Pregnancy as a Qualifying Event for Special Enrollment Periods.

First, consumer-friendly proposals, like ensuring accurate and current provider lists, are the kinds of protections we all need. Inaccurate lists can lead a consumer to inadvertently receive service from a provider that is no longer in the health plan's network. Out-of-network costs are always higher for consumers—the consumer should at least be able to make an informed decision about which provider they will choose. Up-to-date and accurate provider listings are also crucial during open enrollment periods, so that people can choose a health plan that includes their provider in the network. This legislation is a common-sense measure.

Second, we support authorizing pregnancy as a qualifying event for special enrollment periods. Right now, consumers have the opportunity to enroll in marketplace coverage during open enrollment, or if there is a qualifying life event, such as marriage, divorce, loss of other coverage, or the birth of a child. Adding pregnancy to this list of qualifying events allows mothers to access prenatal care, critical to ensuring the health of mother and baby. Prenatal coverage makes sense and can save money by identifying and preventing complications at birth.

Just this past December, Governor Cuomo of New York signed legislation making pregnancy a qualifying life event. This made New York the first state in the country to do so. While states with federally facilitated exchanges do not have the authority to add qualifying life events, states that have state-based exchanges, like Connecticut and New York, have the opportunity to ensure access to prenatal care for all women.

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut (UHCF) is an independent, nonprofit foundation working to shape our state's health care system to provide quality, accessible, affordable care and promote good health for all state residents. We work with a diverse array of partner organizations, as well as with individual consumers from throughout Connecticut.