



Media Statement -- For Immediate Release

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Foundation Lauds House Passage of Innovative Connecticut Healthcare Partnership Bill

Calls the Bill's Opposition "Misleading"

**Statement by Juan A. Figueroa, President
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In the wake of yesterday's 102-43 vote in the House of Representatives to adopt the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership (House Bill 5536), Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut lauds the innovative proposal, urges its passage in the Senate, and calls on Governor M. Jodi Rell to sign the bill into law.

The Healthcare Partnership opens up the state employees' health care plan to allow voluntary buy-in by municipal employees, nonprofit organizations and small businesses. This approach is a common-sense response to rising health care costs for employers. At the same time, it guarantees quality health care to those who choose to join the statewide plan.

Universal Health Care Foundation is committed to quality, affordable health care for every Connecticut resident. Although the Healthcare Partnership does not achieve health care for everyone, it *does* provide a perfect opportunity to build on the purchasing power of a successful state health care pool. In addition, it demonstrates that more people can enjoy the same benefits as our state's elected officials -- *without* breaking the bank.

The voluntary nature of the proposal allows municipalities more choices when purchasing their employees' health plans and the possibility of saving significant money for local taxpayers.

Another encouraging feature of the proposal offers nonprofits, such as churches and social service organizations, *and* small businesses that struggle day-in and day-out to contribute to our economy, the opportunity to buy into the statewide health care plan.

Already, the parties interested in defending the health care status quo are attacking this initiative as "unsafe" for those opting into the state plan. To be clear, the lead voice of opposition is the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA) – an organization which derives significant revenue as a broker of health insurance for businesses and nonprofit organizations. CBIA's corporate interest as a broker hardly makes the organization an objective party in this debate.

The Foundation urges the Senate and Governor Rell to promote choice and innovation in our health care system by supporting the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership.

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