



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 22, 2005**

SB 253, An Act Expanding The HUSKY Program

SB 673, An Act Concerning HUSKY Coverage

HB 5688, An Act Concerning The Establishment Of A Bipartisan Commission To Review Reimbursement Rates Paid To Participating Providers In State Medical Assistance Programs

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to present testimony regarding **SB 253, An Act Expanding The HUSKY Program; SB 673, An Act Concerning HUSKY Coverage; and HB 5688, An Act Concerning The Establishment Of A Bipartisan Commission To Review Reimbursement Rates Paid To Participating Providers In State Medical Assistance Programs.**

SB 253 and SB 673 expand the HUSKY program by extending eligibility to uninsured persons with family income up to three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level and to allow small businesses that currently do not offer health insurance to buy into the HUSKY program. Connecticut hospitals support the expansion of the HUSKY program.

Hospitals are usually the place where an uninsured person will go to seek medical care and services. The state relies on hospitals to be the healthcare safety net for all those needing care, regardless of their ability to pay. Connecticut needs more, not fewer, insured patients. CHA supports mechanisms that would result in more persons becoming insured. This is a good policy for the state, its citizens and its hospitals.

HB 5688 provides for the establishment of a bipartisan commission to annually review reimbursement rates made to medical providers in any state medical assistance program and to allow such commission to increase provider rates to cover the reasonable costs of the services provided. Reimbursement rates to hospitals in Connecticut have not been updated in many years and, as such, CHA supports a mechanism whereby a bipartisan commission could review these rates and ensure that hospitals receive fair and adequate reimbursements for services provided to hospital patients in the Medicaid and State-Administered General Assistance Program.

Thank you for consideration of our position.

For additional information contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.