



**TESTIMONY OF  
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SUBMITTED TO THE  
PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, September 29, 2004**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) and its members appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on the Medicaid eligibility determination process. CHA supports the Program Review and Investigations Committee's focus on conducting a study on this process, specifically focusing on the Department of Social Services' implementation of the application and eligibility determination process for the Medicaid program.

Connecticut's 30 not-for-profit acute care hospitals provide quality care to any patient who walks through their doors – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – regardless of ability to pay. In the past several years, there has been an increase in the number of uninsured persons seeking care at Connecticut's hospitals. This increase places a tremendous strain on the financial viability of our hospitals. The state relies on hospitals to be the healthcare safety net for all those needing care, regardless of their ability to pay. Hospitals rely on the state to be the insurer of last resort for Connecticut's most vulnerable citizens. These are separate roles but inseparable obligations.

It is critical that the state maintain and protect the Medicaid program. The Medicaid program is important because it provides insurance to over 400,000 Connecticut residents. Reductions in Medicaid eligibility would only increase the number of uninsured in our state. As such, the Department of Social Services' implementation of the application and eligibility determination process for the Medicaid program is an important area to evaluate. Analyzing the eligibility options (including presumptive, continuous, and guaranteed eligibility) under Connecticut's Medicaid program and assessing whether recent legislative and regulatory changes have negatively affected the Medicaid population categories are important tasks for the Program Review and Investigations Committee.

As the insurer of last resort, the state needs to focus on how to improve the eligibility determination process to increase the number of Connecticut's citizens that are insured.

CHA would welcome the opportunity to answer questions and to work with the Committee as it accomplishes its scope of review.