



UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE  
FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

**Testimony in Support of  
S.B. 443: An Act Concerning the Monitoring of Health Care Trends by the Attorney General  
Submitted by Frances G. Padilla, President  
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I come before the Public Health Committee as President of the Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut. In this capacity I also serve as a member of the Connecticut Health Care Cabinet and a member of the Steering Committee of the State Healthcare Innovation Model. Public Act #15-146, Section 17, enacted in June 2015, instructed the Connecticut Health Care Cabinet to make recommendations to the Legislature on health care cost containment strategies for Connecticut.

Throughout the Cabinet's examination of other states (MA, VT, RI, MD, OR, and WA) and its deliberations on potential strategies for Connecticut, it was evident that health care cost and quality data are a necessary supporting foundation for informed state policy making. In one form or another, each of these states has such capacity to a larger and more impactful extent than does Connecticut.

The final report submitted to the Legislature on January 5, 2017, acknowledges the difficulty of obtaining accurate and reliable information about industry practices in Connecticut and identifies the need for more systematic investigations of concerning practices by a state agency with appropriate experience.

S.B. 443 would increase the authority of the Attorney General to monitor health care market trends by collecting information from any provider, provider organization, private health care payer or public health care payer through document production, answering interrogatories and providing testimony under oath with regard to health care costs and cost trends, the factors that contribute to cost growth within the state's health care system and the relationship between provider costs and payer premium rates.

As the Cabinet's report notes (on page 43), the role of the Attorney General as investigator and reporter is key to assuring data and information transparency. While other state agencies have the authority to collect and report on health care market trends, the Attorney General, as an independent office, would have the ability to investigate and report independently on politically-sensitive marketplace issues. Working with the also-recommended Office of Health Strategy on an annual public hearing, the Attorney General's Office would help make these issues more transparent.

The report goes on to note that once a new issue is disclosed and better understood because of the Attorney General's work, other state agencies would be in a better position to maintain on-going oversight by collecting and reporting on data similar to that initially collected and reported on by the Attorney General and by implementing strategy initiatives to address concerning practices. In this role, the Attorney General would serve as the state's investigative probe.

The Cabinet came to the conclusion that by working collaboratively with the Office of Health Strategy and other state agencies, the Attorney General would be 1) furthering the State's understanding of the underlying causes of health care cost increases, 2) providing information and policy recommendations for an aligned state health care policy and 3) working with other state agencies to systematize oversight of and transparency regarding important health care market issues. Refinement and implementation of cost containment strategies such as a target cap on the growth of total cost of care, as proposed by another of the Cabinet's recommendations and now raised in S.B. 444, would also be informed by the work of the Attorney General.

I urge this committee and the General Assembly, respectively, to recommend and appropriate sufficient resources to enable the Office of the Attorney General to operationalize this expanded authority. Over the next 5 to 10 years, savings to state government, employers, residents and taxpayers will more than compensate for the funds invested to give the Attorney General's office this capacity at the present time.