



Testimony In Support Of Senate Bill 34: An Act Concerning Funding For The Covered Connecticut Program

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Thank you to the chairs and members of the Appropriations Committee for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 34: An Act Concerning Funding For The Covered Connecticut Program. I am Rosana G. Ferraro, Policy and Program Officer of Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut.

Universal's mission is to accelerate the movement for health justice for everybody because health is a human right and core to social justice and equity. Our fight for affordable, accessible care for all aligns with this mission. We support this bill because it would expand access to no-cost health insurance and improve coverage for residents who are struggling. When we say universal, we mean everybody – health care is a human right, and we appreciate the intent behind this legislation.

SB 34 proposes to:

- Expand the Covered CT program to families (children and parents/caregivers) earning up to 300% of FPL (formerly 175% of FPL) starting July 1, 2023, and
- Expand Covered CT for everyone else (non-pregnant adults ages 19-64) earning up to 300% of FPL starting July 1, 2023.

We fully support expanding eligibility to 300% of FPL for the Covered CT program, which provides no-cost insurance to residents above HUSKY eligibility by subsidizing premiums and out-of-pocket costs of Access Health CT plans by leveraging federal funding. Those with incomes below 300% FPL are struggling to meet their families' basic needs, including health care. This expansion of the program would make big strides towards securing the economic security of Connecticut families and improve health equity.

One note: it appears that the proposed language, as written, would pause coverage for current Covered CT enrollees that are parents/caregivers with incomes up to 175% of FPL and push back the July 1, 2022 start of Covered CT coverage for non-pregnant adults ages 19-64 with incomes up to 175% of FPL and the dental and non-emergency medical transportation benefits. We oppose any pause or delay in serving this population – there are already ongoing outreach and enrollment efforts underway, plus people need access to health care, especially during a pandemic and recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support and thoughts with you.