



Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 5447: An Act Concerning Prior Authorization for Health Care Provider Services

**Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut
March 17, 2022**

Thank you to the co-chairs and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut in support of HB 5447: An Act Concerning Prior Authorization for Health Care Provider Services.

At Universal, we agree with this statement in the testimony on this bill submitted by Lynn Ricci, President and CEO of Hospital for Special Care:

Today, aggressive prior authorization is common throughout the industry. Health plans are using prior authorization to restrict access to patients' covered services.

Other testimony submitted on the bill points to the time-consuming nature of this process, time that takes away from clinical care. In addition to wasting precious staff and clinician time, the over-use of this procedure is likely leading to higher costs and poor patient outcomes, due to the denial or delay of needed and covered care.

At least this bill proposes to study the problem and highlights one possible solution, to exempt providers with good track records of obtaining approvals from being subjected to this wasteful and harmful process. If such a study is approved, we hope it will lead to action.

We would also like to add our support to the suggestion included in the testimony on HB 5447 submitted by Ted Doolittle, the Healthcare Advocate. In his testimony on behalf of the Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA), he proposes,

"To enhance the notifications that consumers receive regarding OHA's services when a prior authorization request or other claim for coverage is denied by a health insurer.... Set the OHA notice apart from the rest of the claim denial document by including it on its own separate page or cover sheet, or alternatively, by including it in a call-out box prominently displayed on the first page of the document."

Including language about making OHA notifications more prominent would ensure that consumers would benefit from the study in a concrete way. They deserve to be more aware of the services that OHA provides to help them fight back against the care delays and denials of the burdensome and wasteful prior authorization process.

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut'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.