



UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

**Testimony Regarding
Senate Bill 811: An Act Concerning Parity in Hospital Sales Oversight
& Senate Bill 916: An Act Concerning Hospital Conversions
Submitted by Frances G. Padilla, President
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Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut (UHCF) is an independent, nonprofit foundation working to shape our state's health care system to provide quality, affordable care and promote good health for all state residents.

We believe that the for-profit or non-profit status of hospitals (either pre- or post-transaction) is less relevant to the transaction than issues of access, affordability, quality and the ability for the entity to meet community needs. In fact, similar concerns should be evaluated with in-state consolidations or purchases between two non-profit entities. We support measures that ensure these critical principles, regardless of the ownership of the hospital.

These bills may not go far enough, as many of the bills being heard today do not. We should not be fearful of being seen as “anti-business” when we are protecting the health and wallets of our state's residents and employers. In fact, having a robust and coordinated health care system in the state actually helps businesses, as healthy employees are able to be productive. Controlled hospital care costs can contribute to lower insurance premiums and out of pocket costs, benefiting both employers who offer coverage and their employees.

These bills only address a small piece of a much bigger picture of health care cost, quality and access, as well as the overall health of the people in our state.

Connecticut faces numerous challenges as it strives to address the need for access to high-quality, affordable health care that improves health for all state residents. The bills you are hearing today address many current challenges, but they are either short-term responses or do not coordinate and leverage existing efforts and investments to help us achieve long-term, sustainable solutions. Even worse, some bills may create unintended consequences.

I urge you to watch Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut's short video testimony and check out our complete written testimony and supporting resources on the web at: bit.ly/uahcf-legislative

We can learn much from other states, such as Massachusetts, Vermont, Oregon and Washington—all of which have an "authority" of some sort that brings together health care planning and policymaking to best serve the health care interests of each state.

These states are trying to look at the whole picture. We do not have a coordinated, cohesive approach in Connecticut and it is to the detriment of the families, businesses, communities and taxpayers of this state.

What we really need is an omnibus bill that incorporates components of these two bills, Senate Bills 810, 812, 813, 814, and 815, as well as House Bill 6938—and possibly more ideas. We ask legislative leaders to work to craft a bill with input from stakeholders including consumers, providers and payers. We believe that such a bill can build on current positive work being done in Connecticut and help realize visionary, strategic and sustainable solutions to our shared health care challenges.