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<u>**Press Statement – For Immediate Release**</u>

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<u>State ranks well overall, but lags behind peers on health care affordability scorecard.</u>

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut applauds the release of Altarum's Healthcare Affordability State Policy Scorecard as a useful tool to help states address the high cost of health care. The scorecard ranks Connecticut 10th out of the 42 states and DC that were included in the study, and while it's encouraging that the hard work of advocates, including Universal Health Care Foundation, has resulted in some progress, health care affordability remains a major challenge for Connecticut residents.

While we may out-perform many of the other states studied, the scorecard points out that Connecticut ranks 34th out of 42 states when it comes to curbing high health care prices – with prices well above the national median.

Furthermore, a Connecticut-specific poll, also conducted by Altarum's Healthcare Value Hub, found that 50% of those surveyed reported one or more problems with health care affordability in the previous year. These problems ranged from skipping prescription drug doses to delaying or completely avoiding going to the doctor or having a procedure done. This is not what affordability looks like. (To learn more about the poll, go here on the foundation's web site.)

The scorecard gives high marks to Connecticut for extending coverage to most of its residents, an important step in improving health care affordability. But the foundation's goal is to see that <u>everyone</u> in the state has access to quality health insurance.

"It's disappointing that Connecticut lags behind our peer states in addressing overall health care affordability. We can and must work to lead on providing quality and equitable health care for all," said Frances Padilla, president of the foundation. States that outrank Connecticut include Massachusetts, Maryland, Oregon and Rhode Island.