

Testimony of

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*In Support of:*

*House Bill 5559: An Act Concerning a Basic Health Program*

Human Services Committee

March 17, 2026

Thank you to the Human Services Committee for raising this bill and allowing us the opportunity to provide comments in support.

On behalf of the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHC/ACT), and its sixteen-member community health centers, I want to thank the Committee for its dedication to listening to Connecticut's residents about these important issues. Connecticut's community health centers serve more than 452,000 people each year – including over 262,000 HUSKY enrollees and 67,000 uninsured individuals – providing medical, behavioral health, dental, and some specialty care in hundreds of locations across the state.

CHC/ACT supports this bill, which would establish a Basic Health Program in Connecticut, providing more affordable coverage options for residents whose incomes are between 133% and 200% of the federal poverty level.

Expanding access to affordable health coverage is critical for improving health outcomes. Research consistently shows that people without health insurance are less likely to receive preventative care and more likely to experience worse health outcomes than those with coverage. When individuals have health insurance, they are more likely to receive routine checkups, screenings, and early treatment for health conditions. This care not only keeps them healthy, but it also reduces expensive emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

At the same time, our health insurance system has become increasingly complex and expensive for many residents to navigate. Even in a state with high coverage rates, many families still struggle with rising premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs. As a result, individuals whose incomes are between 133% and 200% of the federal poverty level often face significant barriers to accessing affordable insurance. Fortunately, Connecticut has the capacity and infrastructure to create solutions that address these gaps, helping to ensure that residents who currently fall into coverage gaps can receive sustainable health coverage.

As you consider these initiatives, it is also important to ensure that community health centers are included in the networks for all of these plans, as we provide integrated, high-quality care in hundreds of locations across the state.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work on behalf of our great state. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or to work together on this initiative: [dpolun@chcact.org](mailto:dpolun@chcact.org) or 860.667.7820.