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March 4, 2020

**Testimony in Support of S.B. 346:  
An Act Concerning Public Options for Health Care in CT**

Dear Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Joint Committee:

My name is Angela Aguilar, and I am a graduate student at the UConn School of Social Work. I am testifying today in support of Senate Bill 346: An Act Concerning Public Options for Health Care in Connecticut. This bill would create a much-needed public option for a high-quality health plan with low-cost premiums and no high deductibles.

Health care is a necessity that we all need but many cannot afford it due to high premiums. Even those of us who can afford some type of health coverage do not benefit, as the only options for us to purchase are high-deductible plans. I believe we should all be entitled to quality health care regardless of income, class, or immigration status. As a social work student and intern, I have come in contact with individuals from all walks of life who do not have access to preventative care or worse have put their health at risk by forgoing necessary medical treatment because of the high costs.

Today the topic of health care remains a national debate, but truthfully no one living in one of the wealthiest nations in the world should be without health care. Creating a public option that is inclusive and available to all CT residents, regardless of immigration status, would improve public health and help reduce overall health care spending. Through passing this legislation, Connecticut would set the example for affordable health care reform and also help our small businesses and nonprofits. Again, I strongly support the passage of S.B. 364 and I hope that the committee will vote favorably.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify,  
Angela Aguilar