

**Testimony Supporting S.B. 346, An Act Concerning Public Options for Health Care in Connecticut**

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Dear Senator Lesser, Representative Scanlon, Senator Kelley, and Representative D'Amato and the esteemed members of the Connecticut Insurance and Real Estate Committee,

My name is Saranya Govindaraju, and I am a graduate student at the Yale School of Public Health. **I am writing today in strong support of SB 346, An Act Concerning Public Options for Health Care in Connecticut.** Thank you for taking the time to consider this important issue.

I support SB 346 because all citizens in Connecticut should have affordable access to health insurance. This plan would not only allow small businesses, Taft-Hartley Unions, and non-profits to buy directly into the state employee health plan but also give individuals access to a qualified health plan. In 2019, enrollment for Access Health CT 3,000 households less than enrollment the previous year ([CT Mirror](#)). The uninsured rate in Connecticut is currently around 5% or to put things into perspective about 186,000 people ([US Census](#)). Other alarming numbers include half of Connecticut adults reporting issues surrounding healthcare affordability ([Altarum](#)). The ConnecticutPlan would give Connecticut residents an affordable option for health care coverage.

In other words, the “public option” will be a way to “increase offerings on the exchange without scaling back required benefits or requiring additional state spending on health care” ([NPR](#)). Washington, despite facing strong opposition from the health care industry, passed a public option in May 2019 that will be targeted towards those not insured by workplace or government health plans ([Politico](#)) and estimates that individual market premiums will decrease by 5-10% ([New York Times](#)). These decreases will have a monumental impact on those who are uninsured in Connecticut. In passing this bill, Connecticut would stand to be a leader in affordable health care reform and addressing the high cost of care.

Thank you again for your time and attention to this important issue. **I am in strong support of SB 346, An Act Concerning Public Options for Health Care in Connecticut.**