



**TESTIMONY OF  
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, March 15, 2011**

**HB 6550, An Act Concerning Medicaid Coverage For Smoking  
Cessation Treatment**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to present testimony concerning **HB 6550, An Act Concerning Medicaid Coverage For Smoking Cessation Treatment**. CHA strongly supports this bill.

Connecticut hospitals are committed to improving the quality of health for the citizens in the communities in which they serve 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. One of the easiest ways to ensure a healthy community is to provide services, education, and opportunities for individuals to lead a healthy lifestyle.

HB 6550 would allow such opportunities by including smoking cessation treatment and products as covered services under the state's Medicaid plan.

Today, Connecticut, Alabama, Georgia, and Missouri are the only states that do not provide tobacco-use cessation coverage for their general Medicaid population. Nearly 35 per cent of Medicaid-insured adults under the age of 65 smoke compared to just 18.3 percent of privately-insured adults. The associated healthcare costs for Medicaid recipients who smoke equals hundreds of millions of dollars a year—costs primarily borne by Connecticut taxpayers.

Providing cessation coverage in the state's Medicaid program would decrease the use of tobacco, thus saving millions of dollars a year and more important, improve the health of Connecticut's residents. It is for these reasons we respectfully urge you to support HB 6550.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.