

Testimony Supporting

H.B. 6600: An Act Concerning the Establishment of the Sustinet Plan

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Before the Public Health, Insurance and Real Estate, and Human Services Committees

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Distinguished Members of the Public Health, Insurance and Real Estate, and Human Services Committees:

I am testifying today on behalf of Connecticut Voices for Children, a research-based public education and advocacy organization that works statewide to promote the well-being of Connecticut's children, youth, and families.

We applaud the Public Health Committee for bringing forward House Bill 6600, AAC the Establishment of the Sustinet Plan (The Plan). This legislation implements the Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut's proposal to address the current shortcomings of health care coverage and access in our state.

As a member of the HealthFirst Connecticut Authority which recently released its report on moving us toward universal coverage and access, I am heartened that so many of the building blocks contained in the HealthFirst report are reflected in this legislation. Many knowledgeable individuals and organizations involved in all aspects of the health care system had input into the development of the Plan.

The Plan adheres to the Institute of Medicine principles for health care reform. In addition, it provides for a health insurance connector and independent oversight body. As we have often stated, HUSKY and Medicaid must be part of the foundation of any health care reform proposal. This legislation builds on and improves our HUSKY program by raising the income limits for family coverage and gradually raising the fees paid to providers in order to increase access. The Plan seeks to reach and enroll individuals in health care coverage options through a variety of important new mechanisms.

As the federal government moves forward with reform on the national level, this plan can serve as a model for nationwide change.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 6600.