



**TESTIMONY
OF THE
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Thursday, March 7, 2002

SB 518, An Act Concerning The HUSKY Program

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of **SB 518, An Act Concerning The HUSKY Program**, a bill that allow a greater number of individuals to access the HUSKY health insurance plans and to ensure that those enrolled in HUSKY health insurance plans do not lose either eligibility due to incremental increases in family income.

Connecticut hospitals provide essential community services and are “safety nets” for all those in need of care, including those who do not have the ability to pay. Connecticut hospitals are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and accept and care for anyone that shows up at their door. It is these “safety nets” of our communities that are in financial distress. The inadequate state, federal and private reimbursement rates, payment delays from third party payors, burdensome and complex regulatory requirements and ever increasing workforce shortage have resulted in hospitals struggling financially to meet their mission of treating everyone and providing high quality care to all patients.

As such, the Connecticut Hospital Association supports SB 518, which would encourage enrollment in the HUSKY program. Hospitals are usually the place where an uninsured person will go to seek medical care and services. CHA supports any mechanisms that would result in more persons becoming insured. This is good policy for the state, its citizens and its hospitals.

Thank you for your consideration.