

Pass SB-596 – Make health insurance affordable

Connecticut health insurance premiums are among the highest in the country. January 1st all Americans will be legally required to secure coverage including 300,000 uninsured Connecticut residents. The centerpiece of reform is Health Access CT, our state's health insurance exchange. The exchange is intended to be a user-friendly marketplace for consumers and small businesses to buy good coverage at an affordable price.

The key to keeping prices affordable in the exchange is active purchasing -- negotiating premiums with insurers. There is ample evidence that competition and negotiating premiums with insurers reduces costs.

- California's new exchange aggressively negotiated prices with their 13 insurers. The most affordable comprehensive Silver plan for individuals costs **\$276 per month** – as much as **29% savings from current offerings**.
- To date Connecticut's exchange has three insurer proposals, from HealthyCT, ConnectiCare and Aetna – averaging **\$427, \$397, and \$364** per month respectively across all plans, including bare bones Bronze plans. Aetna's new Silver Plan averages \$487 per month. These rates are higher than current offerings in Connecticut.
- Ninety percent of large US employers negotiate premiums on behalf of workers. It is estimated that one in ten state residents will buy coverage through the exchange, more than in any state employer group.
- Active purchasing has kept premium costs under control in other state exchanges. Massachusetts's exchange negotiates premiums with insurers and has kept the rise in premiums to half what is it outside the exchange. In contrast, Utah's exchange does not negotiate and premiums inside the exchange are higher than outside.
- Through competitive pressures and federal regulations, active purchasing in the exchange will serve to reduce rates across the entire Connecticut market.

SB-596, AAC the Duties of the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange passed the Senate Wednesday May 29th. It is now on the House calendar.

Call your Representative today urging passage of 596.