

Mayor Justin Elicker
City of New Haven
July 20, 2020



Testimony In Support of LCO 3601
Submitted by Mayor Justin Elicker of New Haven

To the Chairpersons and members of the committee,

I am Justin Elicker, Mayor of the City of New Haven, and am writing in strong support of LCO 3601 An Act Concerning Diabetes and high Deductible Health Plans, which will limit out-of-pocket expenditure on insulin and related equipment. I believe that the passage of this bill is one critical step towards health equity in Connecticut.

Diabetes is an epidemic. According to the American Diabetes Association, approximately 11.3% of the adult population (or, over 350K people) in Connecticut have diabetes.¹ Thankfully, diabetes can be managed with regular doses of synthetic insulin for people with both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. But, the out-of-pocket cost of insulin has become inaccessible for many, with the price of popular insulin biologics more than tripling in the last decade. This situation is untenable and places an unweighty burden on the most vulnerable amongst us. Although some insurance providers and drug manufacturers, such as Cigna and Sanofi, introduced insulin savings programs, these goodwill measures fail to reach the most vulnerable among us, including individuals on Medicare and Medicaid, who cannot access these savings plans because of federal anti-kickback laws. The onus falls on us, public servants, to protect these people.

Here in New Haven the Yale Diabetes Center provides cutting-edge, lifesaving care to people with diabetes. Still, there is much work to do. In January 2019, an oft-cited study published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* reported that one in four Yale Diabetes Center patients self-reported that they had underused insulin due to its high cost.² Since the end of March, six states have passed laws that cap out-of-pocket insulin costs, joining Colorado and Illinois, which had both done so previously. I believe that Connecticut should join these trailblazing states and cap both out-of-pocket insulin and equipment expenditure. This action will alleviate significant financial burdens on some of the most vulnerable in our community and save people from making dangerous - even deadly - medical rationing choices. I stand firmly in support of Senate Bill 1 and hope for its expedient passage.

¹ <http://main.diabetes.org/dorg/PDFs/Advocacy/burden-of-diabetes/connecticut.pdf>.

² <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/2717499>.