



# Fair Haven Community Health Care

Senators Lesser and Kelly, Representatives Scanlon and Pavalock D'Amato

Thank you for this opportunity to speak today in support of **Bill 3601--An Act Concerning Diabetes and High Deductible Health Plans.**

My name is Dr. Suzanne Lagarde. As a physician who now runs Fair Haven Community Health Care, a Federally Qualified Health Center responsible for over 1500 diabetics and whose patients are predominantly low income and minority, I am thrilled that the legislature is taking on this issue of inequity. We cannot allow patients to go without life-saving medication, especially when those medications are in great supply and typically cost little to produce.

The 340B program allows health centers, like Fair Haven, to make drugs available to uninsured and under-insured patients of the health center, at greatly discounted prices. Through the 340b program, certain health facilities, including Federally Qualified Health Centers, are allowed to purchase drugs at government prices. These prices are typically much lower than retail prices—in many instances a month supply of a medication can be hundreds of dollars less costly and on occasion, the savings can be literally in the thousands of dollars. This is especially true with insulin. A commonly used brand of insulin such as Humulin or Levemir, can cost literally less than 20 cents per dose when purchased through the 340B program. There are additional fees that need to be factored into price, but there is no question that insulin purchased through the 340B program can be much less expensive than typical retail prices.

That being said, the 340B program is a tightly regulated program with many layers of rules and regulations that must be adhered to. It is a program that already benefits many uninsured and under-insured residents of CT and we must be absolutely certain that any plan we create remains fully compliant with the extensive 340b regulations. So the state's plan, namely to establish a committee of stakeholders to examine all of these intricacies, is a sound approach. One other state, namely Minnesota, has taken this on and we would be well advised to learn from their experience.

In short, I fully support this effort and look forward to assisting in any way I can to enable the success of this endeavor.

Respectfully submitted  
Suzanne Lagarde MD MBA FACP  
Fair Haven Community Health Care  
New Haven CT 06513  
[s.lagarde@fhchc.org](mailto:s.lagarde@fhchc.org)

