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February 16, 2010

Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Room 2800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

**RE: Testimony in support of Senate Bill 50, AN ACT CONCERNING
ORAL CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENTS**

Dear Senator Crisco, Representative Fontana and members of the
Committee:

On behalf of the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), we appreciate this opportunity to support Connecticut Senate Bill 50, a bill addressing the cost of oral anti-cancer chemotherapy. ACCC fully supports this bill, and encourages the Legislature to pass this legislation quickly to help cancer patients in Connecticut.

ACCC is a membership organization whose members include hospitals, physicians, nurses, social workers, and oncology team members who care for millions of patients and families fighting cancer. ACCC's more than 900 member institutions and organizations treat 60 percent of all U.S. cancer patients when combined with our physician membership.

Oral chemotherapeutics are becoming a major part in the treatment of cancer as over 25% of current drugs in the pipeline are oral regimens. This means that an increasing number of patients will be receiving their therapies orally, as opposed to through an IV. While this may be good for the patient's overall health, the cost of the oral therapies is often too much to bear for patients. Since most of the oral therapies are covered differently than their IV counterparts, much more of the financial burden falls on the patients. These concerns are often what guide a patient's treatment decision options, as opposed to what might be best for their health.

ACCC feels that SB 50 will begin to address some of these issues, and therefore support its passage. In 2007, the 74th Oregon Legislative Assembly passed a bill pertaining to health insurance coverage of oral chemotherapy. Senate bill 8 states, "a health benefit plan that provides coverage for cancer chemotherapy treatment must provide coverage for a prescribed, orally

administered anticancer medication...no less favorable than intravenously administered or injected cancer medications that are covered as medical benefits." ACCC supported this bill and will continue to support other states that take up similar measures.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

Matthew Farber, MA
Director, Provider Economics & Public Policy
Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC)