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**Written Testimony
Comptroller Kevin Lembo
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Concerning

- S.B. 586 AA Requiring Health Insurance Coverage for Preventive Care Provided to Female Enrollees and Access to Prescription Contraceptive Methods**
- S.B. 585 AA Requiring Health Insurance Coverage for Breast Pumps and Protections Afforded to Women Breastfeeding in Places of Employment**
- S.B. 494 AAC Health Insurance Cost-Sharing Requirements for Prescription Contraception**

Good morning Senator Larson, Representative Scanlon, Senator Kelly, Representative Sampson, and Members of the Insurance Committee:

Thank you for raising this legislation and for the opportunity to support these measures that protect women's access to essential preventive health care and contraception, as well as health insurance coverage for breast pumps and improved protections for women breastfeeding in places of employment.

Most of these key health care protections are already provided under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) – however, President Trump and congressional Republicans have announced plans to “repeal and replace” the ACA.

The imminent threat of repeal – and the uncertainty of what any replacement will look like – has forced Connecticut and states across the country to act immediately to protect against a dangerous void of necessary health care provisions.

The health benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and baby are well recognized, so we must ensure that women have the equipment and space necessary to supply their children with breastmilk.

Additional health care protections included under these proposed state measures are not only necessary to protect women's and children's health, but are directly connected to lifetime educational and professional opportunities for women.

According to the National Women’s Law Center, birth control access afforded under the ACA has meant that many women are no longer forced to choose between paying for birth control or other necessities, like groceries and utilities. Not only does this help their short-term financial stability, but it also makes it easier for them to plan whether and when to have children.

Over 55 million women now have coverage for birth control and other preventive services without out-of-pocket costs, which saved women \$1.4 billion on birth control pills alone in 2013.

As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports, women are far more likely to utilize such preventive services, including birth control and potentially life-saving mammograms when cost-sharing – such as deductibles, co-insurance or copayments – is eliminated.

Once again, I thank you for your attention to these women’s health measures and I urge your support.

Thank you for your time.