



Waterbury Regional Chamber  
*driving business to business*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **WATERBURY REGIONAL CHAMBER PRESIDENT AND CEO URGES STATE LAWMAKERS ON TUESDAY TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL AIMED AT REDUCING HEALTHCARE INSURANCE COSTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

**WATERBURY, Conn.**, February 21, 2023—Waterbury Regional Chamber President and CEO Lynn Ward was among the individuals who provided testimony during a press conference organized by CBIA prior to the General Assembly's Insurance and Real Estate Committee's public hearing at the state capitol Tuesday afternoon in favor of House Bill 6710, a proposal aimed at reducing healthcare costs for small businesses and non-profits.

Ward's remarks were provided to an audience of legislators and business and non-profit leaders. The testimony was also submitted to the Committee for the hearing.

Ward, who has been with the Waterbury Regional Chamber since 1984 and its President and CEO since 2009, said that a major concern among chamber members is the rising cost of healthcare, along with fewer options and less quality. The Chamber serves 14 towns within the Greater Waterbury region and has nearly 1,000 members.

The Chamber, which has nine full-time employees, is currently in the process of reviewing its healthcare insurance and learned that it is set to increase by 17 percent. "This is the fifth year in a row this has had double digit increases and there seems to be no end in sight," Ward said, adding that the increased costs are making it harder for small businesses like the chamber to provide competitive benefits for its employees.

"I'm starting with you to find out what can be done to address this," Ward said. "They say Connecticut is an expensive and uncompetitive place to run a business and that is becoming more and more obvious. Can you help me understand what can be done before I lose my employees to larger companies who have better benefits?"

Ward added later: "As the cost of doing business in Connecticut continues to escalate, providing healthcare for its workers should not add to the many stresses a business owner endures. This legislation will allow small businesses across Connecticut to band together and take advantage of some of the same healthcare opportunities as large employers and corporations. This includes lowering costs, as well as expanding coverage options, which will result in a more affordable path for many employers. It will also help workforce retention and recruitment, which is another primary concern for businesses."

She continued: "The last four years have shown just how strong our chamber's members, along with Connecticut as a whole, can be. The opportunity for owners to join forces, while simultaneously helping one another will only further revitalize where our business community was headed pre-pandemic."

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