



**Consumers for
AFFORDABLE
Health Care**

*Advocating the right to health care
for every man, woman and child.*

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Consumer Group Helping Prove Dirigo Saving State \$190 Million Hearing Determining Savings Begins Today

The hearing begins today to determine exactly how much Maine's landmark Dirigo Health Program is saving the state in health care costs. Maine's largest consumer health organization, Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC), is confident that the estimated \$190 million in savings are real and significant.

CAHC is participating in the hearing. CAHC believes that with health care costs so high, it is important to make health care affordable through private and public interventions like those included in the Dirigo Health Act reforms. CAHC is now in its third decade of working for Maine people to bring quality, affordable health care to every man, woman and child –something most Mainers say they want.

Health care is a shared responsibility between employers, individuals, and families; however, it costs too much. We all need to work together to bring down rising health care costs so we get more value for our dollar, and know where each dollar is being spent.

-Doug Clopp, CAHC Policy Analyst

World renowned economists hired by the Dirigo Health Agency (DHA) say the state would have spent \$190 million more on health care last year if Dirigo Health Reform initiatives didn't exist. These savings come from increasing the number of people with insurance, from hospitals reducing spending, and from new laws resulting in refunds to small business policyholders. But, these are just the measureable cost savings. The Dirigo Health Reform Act contains other more broad initiatives that are not considered in the state's analysis.

The hearing that starts today is the first step in a two step process to determine the Dirigo savings amount. The DHA Board of Trustees turns over its findings from today's hearing to Maine's Superintendant of Insurance. In step two, the Superintendant reviews the board's recommendation and makes her decision in September.

Today's hearing is in room 209 of the Cross State Office Building. It will likely continue tomorrow and is open to the public.

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"Health care should be a right, not a privilege."