

The Connecticut General Assembly

Senate Democrats



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SENS. WILLIAMS, GAFFEY, CRISCO AND MURPHY SAY CO-PAYS RAISED BY STATE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT 'BULLETIN' IS OUTSIDE THE LAW

HARTFORD – State **Senate President Pro Tempore Donald E. Williams, Jr. (D-Brooklyn)** was joined today by **Sen. Thomas P. Gaffey, Sen. Joseph J. Crisco, Jr. (D-Woodbridge)** and **Sen. Christopher S. Murphy (D-Cheshire)** to announce concern about the process by which insurance companies recently raised co-payment rates for medically-necessary imaging such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed axial tomography (CAT) scans and ultrasound images.

The Commissioner of the state Department of Insurance issued a bulletin in September 2003, effectively increasing the amount of allowable co-pays for these images, but the senators said her order exceeds her statutory authorization.

“It appears that the Department of Insurance overstepped its authority in making rules without the proper process—a public hearing and a chance for all sides of the issue to be heard,” **Sen. Williams** said. “In the bigger picture, raising co-pays for procedures as crucial as imaging procedures may discourage people from getting the preventative treatment they need. The end result is that these folks seek treatment only when they are at a crisis stage. At that stage, treatment is much more expensive.”

“Soon after this issue was brought to my attention last year the Senate passed the bill I wrote to cap these co-pays per visit and on an annual basis, but the session expired before the House had time to consider it,” **Sen. Gaffey** said. “Now, with new information about the lack of public input into the decision-making process resulting in these dramatically increased fees, I’m more determined than ever to set the record straight and roll back the co-pays.”

Sen. Williams said he’d meet with officials from the state Department of Insurance and discuss this matter with them. **Sens. Gaffey, Crisco, and Murphy** pledged to work toward a legislative compromise to garner a suitable solution for these medically necessary images.

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