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Governor Rell: Charter Oak Health Plan Call Center Receives Over 1,000 Calls on First Day

1,000 Calls from Public with Questions and Application Requests Received by 4 p.m.

Governor M. Jodi Rell said the Department of Social Services' customer service center had received more than 1,000 calls from the public about the Governor's Charter Oak Health Plan by 4 p.m. today. Since the hot-line is open until 8 p.m., this does not yet represent the total number of calls for the first day.

"This phenomenal start to the Charter Oak plan demonstrates just how badly needed and wanted this program is," Governor Rell said. "In the months leading up to yesterday's announcement that applications would be taken starting on July 1st, my office received many inquiries about the program. Now that the program is actually underway, we are being flooded with calls and requests for applications."

In addition, DSS has received dozens of e-mails from people contacting www.charter oak health plan.com, including more than 30 e-mails before 10 a.m. today.

DSS also reported that people on their e-mail contact list who received the application and fact sheet yesterday have been calling with positive comments, expressions of gratitude to the Governor for proposing such a helpful plan and specific eligibility-related questions. More than 200 individuals were e-mailed the application yesterday.

In addition, people who do not have e-mail and had previously contacted DSS will be getting the application in the regular mail.

Governor Rell yesterday announced that the state is now accepting applications for the Charter Oak Health Plan. The plan provides affordable health care for Connecticut's uninsured adults who are too old for HUSKY but too young for Medicare. It is the first health plan in the nation for the uninsured that does not require income limits, employer mandates or individual mandates.

"For the first time, Connecticut residents who are not able to get health insurance through their jobs now have access to decent, affordable coverage," Governor Rell said. "Charter Oak is cost effective for both enrollees and taxpayers and meets a critical need for state residents. I urge all eligible residents to apply as soon as possible."

A new toll free hotline, 1-877-77-CTOAK (1-877-772-8625), has been set up for the public to get more information about Charter Oak. The line will be open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Fridays and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. More information and applications can be found at www.charteroakhealthplan.com .

Governor Rell proposed the Charter Oak Health Plan in December 2006. The Charter Oak Health Plan is based on a public-private partnership model that strikes a balance between individual responsibility and government assistance for the lowest-income participants.

Individual premiums will range from \$75 to \$259 and annual deductibles will range from \$150 to \$900. The Governor noted that Charter Oak will cover enrollees with pre-existing medical conditions.