

Health care advocate gets House nod

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HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) - The state House of Representatives is backing Connecticut's health care advocate despite Gov. M. Jodi Rell's proposal to eliminate his office.

The lawmakers overwhelmingly supported Kevin Lembo's confirmation Wednesday, sending it to the Senate for final action.

Lembo's office helps consumers navigate the health insurance system and challenge denials of service and claims.

Rell proposed eliminating the office to cut costs, saying Connecticut already has departments of public health, insurance and social services.

Lembo's supporters, including several lawmakers, say his office's \$1 million annual budget is covered by industry fees, not the state budget. They also say it has had a 75 percent success rate in winning appeals for more than 7,500 people served since 2004.

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