



**Mary's
Center**

**3912 Georgia Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20011**

**Testimony of Tamrat Workineh
DC HealthLink In-Person Assister**

**Before the
COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
AGENCY BUDGET OVERSIGHT HEARING**

***DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority Fiscal Year 2016-2017
Committee on Health & Human Services
Chairperson, Councilmember Yvette Alexander***

**Wednesday, April 13, 2016 – 10:00 am
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20004**

Good Morning, Madam Chairperson and members of the committee,

I am here to present my testimony about the role played by DC Health Link (DCHL) and Sister Organizations. My name is Tamrat Workineh. I am an In-Person Assister (IPA) at Mary's Center.

As a certified and bilingual IPA, I am the front line of consumer-engaging experience. I provide face-to-face consumer counseling, translate educational materials into Amharic - the third most widely spoken language in the District, and work jointly with DCHL, the Economic Service Administration Centers (ESA), and other stakeholders.

Madam Chairperson and members of the committee;

Providing awareness and conducting enrollment is not an easy task, mainly for Assisters. It requires perseverance, responsibility, great customer handling, and trust. Embraced with all these qualities and team work, it was possible to meet the intended objectives. We have created access to quality, affordable health coverage for District residents and become the best in the nation in signing up the highest percentage of people eligible for private health insurance coverage.

During the Third Open Enrollment Period season (OEP3), DCHL and I worked tirelessly to create materials in the Amharic language. These materials led to the participation and engagement of the Ethiopian community in several enrollment events, particularly at faith-based gatherings, in which hundreds of attendees were provided with health insurance and enrollment information.

Our success was not achieved overnight, however. Efforts exerted by supervisors and Assisters of DCHL, Mary's Center, Whitman-Walker, and other stakeholders made it all possible. In spite of cold and blustery weather, in the evening or on weekends, unchallenged by family ties and social affairs, we reached the unreached through One-Touch enrollments, Knock-Knock campaign, and faith-based events. These are just a few examples.

Madam Chairperson and members of the committee;

Before closing my testimony, allow me to share some words of consumers who benefited from the enrollment:

- “Enrollment through DC Health Link saved me unaffordable medical expense. Thank you DC Health Link for making my life easy.”
- “A week after getting insured through One Touch enrollment, I was admitted to Howard Hospital on emergency. How could I pay my bill, if I had no Medicaid?”
- “DC Health Link Website simplified my enrollment from in-line to online!”

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.