



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE February 21, 2007

Joan Leavitt, Section Chief, Facility Licensing and Investigations Section, Health Care Systems
Branch 509-7406

House Bill 5508 - An Act Authorizing Commitment to a Chronic Disease Hospital Under A Psychiatric Emergency Certificate

The Department of Public Health wishes to express the following concerns related to House Bill 5508.

This bill, as written, is in conflict with Section 19-13-D1 (b)(2) of the regulations of Connecticut State Agencies which define a Chronic Disease Hospital as providing treatment to a wide range of chronic diseases, whereas, psychiatric hospitals or psychiatric units within acute care hospitals provide care to individuals with acute psychiatric conditions as defined in Section 19-12-D1 (b)(1)(A) or Sections 17-227-14a through 17-227-16, inclusive of the regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

- House Bill 5508 focuses on patients who are "dangerous to himself or others or gravely disabled", in essence, patients who are acutely ill and need immediate evaluation and treatment. The bill only requires a psychiatrist to evaluate the patient within 24 hours of admission to the chronic disease hospital, which does not meet the needs of someone who is "dangerous" or "gravely ill".
- Regulations governing a Chronic Disease Hospital are identified in Section 19-13-D5 of the regulations of Connecticut State Agencies whereas regulations governing Hospitals For Mentally Ill Persons are found in Sections 17-227-14a through 17-227-16 of the regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. These Hospital regulations specify the types of facilities, staff and all other necessary personnel required for the care and treatment of a patient with an acute psychiatric illness and differ significantly from those governing a Chronic Disease Hospital.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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