

TESTIMONY

**Department of Information Technology
State of Connecticut
Before the Public Health Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly**

January 31, 2007

Chairpersons Handley, Sayers and Honorable Members of the Public Health Committee; my name is Steve Casey, Director of Business Development for the Department of Information Technology.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Raised Bill No. 6839 "An Act Concerning Health Information Technology."

This bill addresses the need for the State of Connecticut to "develop, implement and periodically update a health information technology plan for establishing a state-wide, integrated electronic health information infrastructure." The bill calls for the creation of an Office of Health Information Technology within the Department of Public Health that would "identify, adopt and promote the use of open data standards for interoperability that (A) include provisions relating to security, privacy, data content, structures and format, vocabulary and transmission protocols, and (B) take into account and are compatible with any national data standards in order to allow for interstate interoperability." This would require coordination with Executive Order 13335 (the national health information network).

We applaud the goal of seeking the mechanism to investigate interoperability options for health care information technology systems. DOIT would like to play a role in any efforts that result. We have a history of facilitating enterprise projects pertaining to health care information, successfully collaborating with DPH to host their IT platforms and networks for CT Electronic Disease Surveillance System (CEDSS) and Connecticut Immunization Registry Tracking System (CIRTS). The Public Health Information Network (Phin) Messaging applications are also presently hosted at DOIT. DPH is one of ten agencies participating in the State's HIPAA Compliance Program being headed up by DOIT.

DOIT also is involved with DMHAS in the Mental Health Transformation Grant Process, a five year, \$13.7 million federal/state effort program underway to transform the delivery of mental health services in the State. Our experience can be brought to bear on any enterprise effort such as that described in the proposed legislation.

We have delivered successfully on enterprise projects such as

- CJIS - CT Justice Information System
- Core-CT
- CEN - CT Education Network and
- HIPAA – Health Information Portability and Accountability Act.

DOIT employees have the experience and expertise in Information Technology operating the State of Connecticut

- Telecommunications network
- Enterprise E-Mail
- Array of Application Hosting Platforms
- IT Architecture and
- Security Infrastructure

DOIT has been involved with the E-Health initiative with DPH and a consortium of other organizations developing an assessment of a vision to “improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of healthcare in the state.”

DOIT has been given the responsibility for IT policy development and implementation by the Legislature for Executive agencies. There are components of this legislation that will have a significant impact on IT Policy to support the outlined objectives.

We request that the Public Health Committee involve DOIT as well as other agencies affected with Electronic Health Records, such as DSS, DCF, DMHAS and DMR, as this bill is crafted and moves through the legislative process.