



**Connecticut Academy of  
Physician Assistants**

Public Health Committee

Testimony RE: **HB 7155, AN ACT CONCERNING A PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS,**  
March 14, 2007

The Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA) requests that the Public Health Committee move favorably for **HB 7155, AN ACT CONCERNING A PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS**, substituting the revised language that has been agreed upon by the Department of Public Health and the Coalition.

Physician Assistants, like other healthcare practitioners in the state of Connecticut, currently do not have access to a confidential referral process for impaired practitioners. As a result, practitioners are hesitant to seek intervention for referral or treatment. This compromises patient safety, as well as the overall integrity of the healthcare team.

The proposed bill, supported by a large coalition of diverse practitioners, makes prevention, intervention, referral assistance, and support services available to healthcare practitioners across many disciplines. Combining resources and knowledge into one unified program is practical, efficient, and cost-effective.

There are safety nets and ongoing monitoring systems built into the program to ensure that the practitioner is able to practice with skill and safety, with mandatory referral to the Department of Public Health for non-compliance. The Coalition and the Department of Public Health have worked together to ensure that the program will promote, protect, and enhance quality medical care for our patients, as well as promote the health and well being of healthcare practitioners across our state. The physician assistants support the Healthcare Practitioner Assistance Program bill, HB 7155, because it is good for the citizens of Connecticut.

Tricia Marriott, PA-C, MPAS  
ConnAPA President-Elect and Legislative Chair