State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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MEMBER
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Public Health Committee
Public Hearing Testimony
Wednesday, February 21, 2007

Dear Senator Handley, Senator Roraback, Senator Slossberg, Representative Sayers, Representative Carson, Representative Ritter and Public Health Committee Membership:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 86, *AN ACT ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR EARLY IMMUNIZATION AGAINST HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS* and House Bill 6977, AN ACT CONCERNING PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR DISEASES CAUSED BY HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS. This legislation is designed to protect women from a devastating form of cancer and to prevent the further spread of the virus that can cause it.

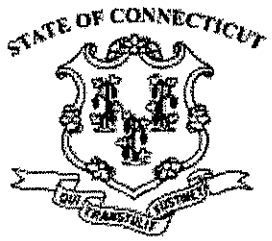
Worldwide, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women. In the United States, the American Cancer Society estimates that in 2006, 9,710 women will be diagnosed with and more than 3,700 women will die of cervical cancer. Recent advances in medical experts' understanding of cervical cancer and the virus that causes it, HPV, as well as the availability of new preventative technologies, make its elimination possible. This is an opportunity we cannot waste.

HPV is a virus transmitted through sexual contact. People who abstain from sex or use protection probably won't get it. We would all like to think that by educating our children about the dangers of HPV or other STDs they won't contract them. Well, how often do our kids always listen to us? How long has sex education been a part of the public school curriculum and how many people still contract a STD? Even the most cautious in our communities are not immune to the threats of an STD; I would point out that rape and child molestation victims do not have the luxury to choose who they have sex with. Since men can carry the HPV virus and not know it, it is important that we take the necessary precautions to protect ourselves and our children. In an effort to provide the best protection possible, the age for vaccination has been set around 9-25 preferably at 12 prior to sexual debut.

I believe that requiring this vaccine is good public policy. Parents that have religious or medical objections to this vaccine can choose not to have their girls protected. Even if a

few people decide not to take advantage of this vaccine, we can still eliminate HPV through the Herd effect: the more people we vaccinate, the less likely the virus will spread. I also would remind this Committee that I have proposed my own version of this bill and would encourage leadership to amend SB 86 or HB 6977 to include language that would provide funding for educational outreach programs designed to inform the public about HPV. I have included a copy of my bill with my testimony.

I thank the Committee for raising this important bill and ask that it please be given a favorable report.



General Assembly

January Session, 2007

Proposed Bill No. 6085

LCO No. **1979**

Referred to Committee on Public Health

Introduced by:

REP. HOVEY, 112th Dist.

AN ACT CONCERNING AN APPROPRIATION FOR INCREASING AWARENESS ABOUT HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS AND CERVICAL CANCER.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

That (1) title 19a of the general statutes be amended to require that the human papilloma virus vaccination be included in the adolescent vaccination schedule; (2) the sum of ___ dollars be appropriated to the Department of Public Health, from the General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, to study prevention strategies and treatment for cervical cancer; and (3) the sum of fifty thousand dollars be appropriated to the Department of Public Health, from the General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, for a grant to the Connecticut Cancer Partnership for the creation of an outreach campaign to provide information to the public about the human papilloma virus vaccination.

Statement of Purpose:

To reduce the incidence of cervical cancer and to increase awareness about the link between human papilloma virus and cervical cancer.