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Referring Bill: SB 1342

Thank you Senator Hanley, Rep. Sayers and the members of the public health committee for listening to my testimony today.

On May 9th 1997 I was at the hospital with labor pains with my 3rd child. Due to the fact that I was preeclamptic I was placed on monitors and was not allowed to leave my bed. All of a sudden I hear a woman screaming in Spanish "Tienes que salir de aqui no te quiero a ti, a penas estabas mapeando." (translated: You need to get out of here I don't want you here, you just finished mopping.) The lady continued to scream even louder and my doctor sent the nurse to me to see if I could help. (I am bilingual.) While still in labor I disconnected the monitors and the nurse removed the I.V. I put on a gown (I was on just a johnny coat before), and proceeded to the adjacent room. When I approached the room the patient complained that the staff had used a male janitor to translate while she was still on the stir-ups. I informed her that I was a patient as well but if she agreed that I would gladly serve as her interpreter and I promised to keep all of the information she gave me confidential. She agreed and the doctor started asking questions. It turns out that the patient had an accident, 5 months pregnant and was concerned about her baby's well being. After translating her concerns to the doctor, the doctor examined the patient and informed her that her baby was fine. I then returned to my room and 10 minutes later I gave birth to a healthy 6 pound boy. There are several concerns with this incident. First the patients right to privacy were violated. Second, the male janitor was place in a position where he was in a hostile environment. Furthermore a male janitor is not an appropriate staff member to perform the task of interpretation to a woman on stir-ups especially when she just saw him mopping the floor minutes earlier. As a member of the Naugatuck Valley Project as well as the Connecticut Coalition for Medical Interpreters, I find that it is my responsibility and duty to assist in any way to promote medical interpretation as part of a campaign for providing Quality health care for all. I have been handed the duty for performing Hospital Walk-throughs in the entire Naugatuck River Valley. These walk-throughs are a service to area hospital for participating with the Naugatuck

Valley Project in providing quality care for all and for sitting on the Medical Interpreters Committee. The findings are shared with the entire committee to help improve the quality of care for patients with limited English proficiency. Linguistic competency and proficiency are vital to a medical translator. I appeal to the public health committee to pass bill SB 1342. This is a growing need in our community and it will not just go away. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Aide Lorduy

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