



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH

March 10, 2008

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### Senate Bill 576 - An Act Concerning Patient Access to Laboratory Test Results

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The Department of Public Health provides the following information regarding Senate Bill 576.

This act would require health care providers to authorize clinical laboratories to directly communicate medical testing results to the patient, unless the provider has determined that this information would be detrimental to the patient. While the Department supports the concept of affording patients more ready access to their medical records, including medical testing results, we unfortunately are not at a point where the State Public Health Laboratory could realistically communicate test results to patients on a routine basis. Our laboratory information system is almost 40 years old, and reprogramming our system is not a viable option. We have instead opted to replace the system. Implementing the new system laboratory-wide will be a multi-year effort. As part of that effort, we will explore the potential to implement an automated solution for communicating test results directly to patients. However, at this time, any such reporting is a manual process of printing and mailing test results directly to the patient. The Public Health Laboratory annually issues almost 200,000 medical test reports to health providers, and could not handle this volume of manual reporting to patients. It should also be noted that the State Public Health Laboratory does not have a provider-patient relationship with the patients tested, and could not interpret test results for patients. This would of necessity remain the responsibility of the health care provider who ordered the testing.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask that, should this bill move forward, the State Public Health Laboratory be exempted from these reporting provisions. Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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