



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

**March 6, 2008**

*Meg Hooper/Chief, Planning Branch 509-7128*

**House Bill 635 - An Act CONCERNING ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS.**

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The Department of Public Health opposes Senate Bill 635

This bill will amend PA 07-2 (section 19a-25d of the 2008 supplement to the general statutes) that required the Department of Public Health to competitively award a contract for the development of a State Health Information Technology Plan before 6/30/09 to a due date of March, 2009. In addition, the bill now requires the Plan to include an explanation of proposed data standards that differ national data standards adopted by the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology, and how such differing standards allow for interstate operability.

In immediate response to the 2007 legislation, the Department of Public Health established a DPH Health Information Exchange RFP Advisory Committee consisting of representatives with appropriate expertise from the Department, the Office of Health Care Access, CT Dept of Consumer Protection, CT Department of Social Services, CT Department of Information Technology, CT Office of Policy and Management, CT State Medical Society, and a community health center. The Advisory Committee served an important role to develop the RFP in accordance with the original legislative intent and direction. There was a lengthy process that was successfully completed with the issuance of a clear and comprehensive RFP issued in December 2007. The RFP included the due date of June 2009 for the State Health IT Plan and strict applicability to national data standards. The Department has received 7 responses to the RFP and is currently convening RFP review meetings with the DPH Health Information Exchange RFP Advisory Committee.

This legislation will require the withdrawal of the December 2007 issued RFP and the entire RFP development process to begin anew with the new date and responsibility. Respondents will need to develop and submit revised proposals. And the DPH Health Information Exchange Advisory Committee will need to repeat the development and review process. This will delay the planning process by another 4-6 months. Whereas, if the enabling legislation remains as is, then a contract can be executed before May, 2008 for work to begin immediately.

The Department will encourage the selected organization to develop a State Health Information Technology Plan by March 2009 and include interstate interoperability into the Plan's proposed protocols. However, the Department cannot legally hold the selected organization to these revisions based on the current RFP.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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