

March 20, 2009

**TESTIMONY
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**Re: SB 1091 AAC Complaints Pending in the Department of Public Health Against
Physicians and Other Health Care Providers**

**Ellen Andrews, PhD
Executive Director**

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our strong support of SB 1091. This bill recognizes the importance of including health care consumer voices in investigations or reviews of provider complaints. The consumer's voice is integral to understanding the context of any complaint; it is difficult to understand how a complete investigation could exclude patient testimony.

Connecticut has a long history of excluding the most important stakeholders, consumers, from important health care decisions. There has been some movement to rectify that oversight in policymaking circles as the state is starting to appreciate the wisdom and perspective that only consumers can provide and the benefits to thoughtful policymaking.

This bill expands that understanding to DPH investigations of complaints against providers. Consumers not only have a right to be notified and kept updated on the status of their complaints, consumer input can provide an important "reality check" on other information and testimony gathered in the investigation. To ensure public confidence in the state's oversight of providers, consumers need to know that their complaints are heard, that their input is recorded and valued, and the results are acted upon.

I urge you to pass SB 1091 to ensure the integrity of DPH's oversight processes. Thank you for your time and your commitment to fairness and the health of every Connecticut resident.