



703 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511
Phone (203) 562-1636 • Fax (203) 562-1637 • www.cthealthpolicy.org

March 16, 2009

**TESTIMONY
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Re: SB 782: AA Promoting the Use of Health Information Technology
Ellen Andrews, PhD
Executive Director**

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our strong support of SB 782. This bill recognizes the importance of interoperable electronic health information as a critical driver of health care system reform in our state. As a consumer member eHealthConnecticut's Board of Directors, I urge you to pass the bill.

e-health initiatives are unique in health system reform proposals, gaining support from virtually all sectors and stakeholder groups in a contentious health care environment. Improving the appropriate flow of information will reduce costs, improve quality and make our health systems more efficient. Providers need comprehensive, valid, up-to-date medical information whenever they treat a patient to ensure the best health outcome. This bill creates a framework to thoughtfully build a system that serves the needs of Connecticut's consumers, providers, and payers.

While the federal stimulus package devotes significant resources to e-health initiatives, there are many important and complex decisions to be made here in Connecticut in creating our health information exchange system. Thankfully, Connecticut is exceptionally fortunate in that much of that foundation building has been done. eHealthConnecticut, a nonprofit organization, has been moving toward this opportunity for three years. eHealthConnecticut's very active Board includes representatives from purchasers, insurers, providers, state policymakers, researchers, and consumers. The group has worked collaboratively to encourage and facilitate health technology adoption and exchange, but perhaps more importantly, has built trust and a working relationship among stakeholders groups with differing interests and resources. eHealthConnecticut is now developing, through a transparent public process, a set of standards and policies to guard the privacy and security of Connecticut consumers' medical information. eHealthConnecticut is also currently working on two initial projects for health information exchange and to monitor quality.

I urge you to pass SB 782 and help ensure that Connecticut consumers enjoy the best health care possible. Thank you for your time and your commitment to excellence in public service.