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Connecticut State Medical Society Testimony
Senate Bill 1046 An Act Concerning Restricted Access to Prescription Drug
Information
March 2, 2009

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, Senator Crisco, Representative Fontana and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, Senator Doyle and Representative Walker and members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Matthew Katz, Executive Vice President of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS). On behalf of our more than 7,000 members thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on Senate Bill 1046 An Act Concerning Restricted Access to Prescription Drug Information.

Though CSMS does not oppose the concept of restrictive access to certain prescription drug information, we must oppose this bill as we believe it is overly broad and does more harm than good from the standpoint of physician education. It also would deny access to critical prescribing information associated with the medical care and treatment of patients.

This bill, as presently constructed, would prevent physicians from learning of their own prescribing information, including, but not limited to, whether their patients are actually filling the prescriptions that are written. In this age of health information technology, one of the benefits of prescribing information is to determine if patients are complying with treatment protocols and regimens and one key aspect of compliance is whether or not prescriptions are actually filled. It is just not individualized patient data that is helpful for physicians in their understanding of their patients' compliance, but aggregate de-identified data.

CSMS, in partnership with the American Medical Association (AMA) presently provides CSMS member physicians with a quarterly on-line newsletter and data source called *AMA Therapeutic Insights*. This is a continuing medical education (CME) newsletter intended to provide primary care physicians with evidence based guidelines for selected medication conditions. CSMS is pleased to offer this online CME activity that provides unprecedented access to personal, state and national prescribing patterns to assist Connecticut physicians in clinical practice. *Therapeutic Insights* is a quarterly newsletter

available to pharmaceutical companies. This program allows physicians to opt out of sharing prescribing data with pharmaceutical representatives—if they want. Yet it still keeps the data available to advance important public health benefits, such as timely and appropriate communication about drug recalls and evidence-based medical research. Neither AMA nor CSMS, collects, sells or has access to prescribing data, but rather provides a way for physicians to determine how their data will be used. The prescribing data in *Therapeutic Insights* are provided by IMS Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today.