

Diana Henderson
Hamden, CT
RE: SB 325
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Thank you Senator Colapietro and Representative Shapiro. My name is Diana Henderson and I am here today to testify in support of SB 325, AN ACT CONCERNING A PHARMACY ERROR DATABASE AND PHARMACY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES.

I am speaking to you as the mother of a baby who was the victim of not one but two (2) pharmacy errors. These errors occurred at the same time at the same national chain pharmacy. In one error a medication intended for use in her ear was mislabeled with instructions that it be placed in her eye. In the second she was given a completely wrong medication. I have since come to find out that the State of Connecticut offers very little protection to consumers in the arena of pharmacy errors.

I contacted the Department of Consumer Protection's Drug Control Division and followed through with everything I was asked to do. I spoke with an agent both on the phone and in person. I turned over the prescription bottles to help with their investigation. I made myself available in case I would be needed for any hearings. Then I discovered that citizens of the state of Connecticut are not entitled to ANY information concerning pharmacy errors.

Even as the victim of these errors we were not entitled to ANY information about how they could have occurred or what has been done to ensure that they do not happen again. All investigations are considered confidential. We could not ascertain if this pharmacy or this pharmacist has a history of these types of errors. We could not even find out if this case led to any sort of sanctions, retraining or investigation. At one point when trying to retrieve our bottles of medication we were even told that there was no history of our ever having filed a complaint. Clearly this must change.

Each month I read the minutes of the Pharmacy Commission meetings to see if I could find any information on what, if any action may have been taken. Surely, I thought, with two such egregious errors something had to be done. I discovered that all pharmacy errors are recorded only by case number, which is also kept confidential. No identifying information

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concerning the pharmacist, the pharmacy or even the town where the error occurred is listed. As long as the pharmacist completes a continuing education course on prescription errors the case is dismissed. A pharmacist who commits 2 errors in a three year period may have their name published if they are the subject of a hearing. Apparently 2 errors occurring on the same evening did not merit a hearing, though. Our pharmacist and pharmacy were mentioned only one time in the minutes – when the Pharmacy Commission approved her promotion to pharmacy manager 5 months after these errors occurred.

I have come to ask that you allow consumers access to error histories for pharmacies and pharmacists so we have the opportunity to make informed decisions about an important part of our health care. There were 5 other pharmacies located within 2 blocks where I could have filled these prescriptions. We can make such informed decisions concerning doctors and hospitals so why not pharmacists?

An agent with Drug Control told me that the only way to learn about errors is to hope that victims go public. Also, since many errors are committed by pharmacists who have developed substance abuse issues they protect them in hopes that they will seek treatment. While I am all for people seeking help with substance abuse issues I believe that it is more important to protect the innocent consumer.

I do not want my daughter to be the next victim of someone with a history of errors. She has already been victimized enough.