

**CRANIOFACIAL TEAM**  
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February 4, 2009

Public Health Committee  
Re: H.B. No. 6265 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SPEECH AND LANGUAGE  
PATHOLOGY

Dear Committee Members,

As a long-standing member of the Connecticut Children's Hospital medical community I would like to submit testimony opposing the proposed changes to the definition of the roles and responsibilities of Speech/Language Pathologists in the State of Connecticut. As a 21-year member of the Craniofacial Team I receive referrals from private and hospital-based ENT professionals and plastic surgeons to specifically "diagnose" velopharyngeal insufficiency in patients presenting with hypernasality with or without speech disorders. In these cases the cause of hypernasality can be developmental, structural or functional and can only be diagnosed through objective assessment measures such as nasendoscopy. These patients are then referred back to the referring physician for management consideration. I consider this collaboration to be one of the most rewarding aspects of optimal patient care.

It is unclear how patients will benefit from the proposed change in vocabulary from "diagnose" to "evaluate". In fact, this proposed change will significantly reduce the efficiency of speech pathologists in multiple settings such as schools, early intervention programs and rehabilitation settings. It is well within a speech pathologists scope of practice, as outline by the State of Connecticut and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, to "diagnose" multiple conditions that are not within the medical realm. I would suggest a thoughtful, multidisciplinary dialogue between the ENT and Speech Pathology communities to address specific concerns, if any exist, that impact patient care.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter,

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