



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE **March 16, 2009**

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House Bill 6674 - An Act Concerning Workforce Development and Improved Access to Health Care Services

The Department of Public Health has the following concerns with House Bill 6674.

Section 1

Requires the Connecticut Department of Public Health to establish and manage a new workforce development committee in collaboration with other state agencies and academia representatives. Sections of the proposed legislation are duplicative of work currently being done through the Health and Education Initiative by the Allied Health Workforce Policy Board, the Connecticut Office of Workforce Competitiveness, the Connecticut Department of Higher Education and Department of Public Health to support nursing educators.

Additionally, the legislation is focused on the development of academic programs that the Department is not currently, nor designed to be, involved in. The coordination, research and development of the report would have significant fiscal impact on the Department as it could not be accomplished within existing resources. The Department does not support section 1 of this bill at this time as the Governor's budget does not provide resources for this purpose.

Section 2

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) are primary health care providers and work collaboratively with a wide variety of licensed health care practitioners, including physicians, when necessary and appropriate. Under current law, with the exception of physicians, such collaboration occurs without a collaborative agreement, written or otherwise.

This section repeals the requirement that APRNs must collaborate with a licensed physician and acknowledges the APRNs' collaborative relationships with physicians as well as other health care providers. This proposal would also remove the requirements that nurse anesthetists must have a written collaborative agreement with a physician, and that while prescribing and administering medical therapeutics during surgery, the physician who is medically directing the prescriptive activities must be physically present within the institution, clinic or other setting where the surgery is being performed.

The Department respectfully requests the Committee to consider the following:

- The requirement for the physician who is medically directing the prescriptive activities to be physically present within the institution, clinic or other setting where the surgery is being performed while a nurse anesthetist is prescribing and administering medical therapeutics should not be repealed.
- The term " licensed health care provider" should be more clearly defined.
- APRNs should be required to maintain arrangements for coverage of patients in their absence.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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