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**Connecticut State Medical Society Testimony**  
**Program Review and Investigations Committee**  
**Scope of Practice Determination for Health Care Professionals**  
**October 1, 2009**

Senator Kissel, Representative Mushinsky and members of the Program Review and Investigations Committee, on behalf of the over 7,000 members of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today on the proposed Committee Study ***Scope of Practice Determination for Health Care Professionals***. We welcome the opportunity to work with you and Committee Staff as information is obtained and a final report developed.

We firmly believe that too many resources are traditionally expended to ensure that changes are appropriate and in the best interest of patient care when non-physician groups seek to expand scopes of practice. Though not unique to Connecticut, state legislatures are routinely overwhelmed by the number of scope of practice proposals they are asked to consider. Often decisions are made without the availability of thorough, professional and independent understanding of the health and economic implications of proposals.

Appropriately, the Federation of State Medical Board (FSMB) in its 2005 report ***Assessing Scope of Practice in Health Care Delivery: Critical Questions in Assuring Public Access and Safety***, stated that "scope of practice changes are among the most highly charged policy issues facing state legislators and health care regulators. Debates on scope of practice can be contentious and are influenced by a variety of factors, including fluctuations in the health care workforce and specific health care specialties geographic and economic disparities in access to health care services; economic incentives for physicians and other health care practitioners and consumer demand." Unfortunately, the influence of these factors often leads to support for requests to create, change, or expand scope that are not supported by a verifiable need or data to substantiate the clinical quality of those wishing to expand their scope of practice.

As demonstrated in the committee's staff briefing, several states have established alternative methods for adjudicating request to alter practice scopes. Additionally, FSMB has established guidelines for use by policy makers and organizations such as the American Medical Association (AMA) have developed templates for the establishment of State-based Review Committees.

We feel that the study undertaken by this committee offers the opportunity for all health care professionals to work the you to develop recommendations for a more appropriate system that this unique and right for Connecticut; a system that fully utilizes the abilities of healthcare professionals, increases access to appropriate healthcare services and maintains a focus on quality and safety.

That you for allowing CSMS to be a part of this important endeavor.