



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

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### House Bill 5893 - An Act Requiring the Establishment of an Emergency Response System of Volunteer Health Care Providers

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The Department of Public Health provides the following information with regard to House Bill 5893.

- This bill would establish an emergency response system to facilitate the deployment and use of licensed practitioners to provide volunteer health and veterinary services in response to declared emergencies.
- The bill would also establish reasonable safeguards to assure that volunteer health care practitioners are appropriately licensed and regulated to protect the public's health, provide the state with the authority to regulate, direct and restrict the scope and extent of services provided by volunteer health practitioners, and provide limitations on the exposure of volunteer health practitioners to civil liability to create a legal environment conducive to volunteerism.
- **There are currently two state wide, federally funded emergency response system initiatives that have been implemented for volunteer health practitioners.**
- Through the **State's Hospital Emergency Credentialing Program** and the **Medical Reserve Corp**, thousands of volunteer health practitioners have been pre-credentialed and trained to be available for response in a declared emergency.
- **The existing programs have established safeguards** to assure that volunteer health care practitioners are appropriately licensed and regulated, and state law already provides limitations on the exposure of volunteer health practitioners to civil liability.
- It is not clear whether this proposal is intended to replace these existing programs, or to establish another emergency response system for volunteer health care providers.
- Establishment of a new emergency response system would have significant fiscal impact to the State as well as potentially to the Department.
- To the extent that this proposal is duplicative of the existing initiatives, the Department would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Committee to discuss the current programs.

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



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