



CONNECTICUT CENTER
FOR PATIENT SAFETY
QUALITY HEALTHCARE IS A RIGHT.

Good afternoon Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee

My name is Jean Rexford, Executive Director of the CT Center for Patient Safety and I am here today in strong support of Senate Bill 270

Senate bill 270 addresses creating regional transparency and accountability on pharmaceutical company payments to physicians – either in the form of gifts to health care providers. We would be joining other New England states in addressing this issue. This bill should be familiar to you as an even stronger bill was passed out of committee last year. We heard your concerns and acknowledge, in this economic climate, we do not want to jeopardize any employment.

Because you have heard so much testimony in the past, I wanted to be respectful of your time. We have a growing coalition and testimony of just some of the supporting organizations is included.

Based on the experience in Massachusetts where similar gift ban legislation was enacted in 2008 there is no data to suggest that either scientists or research dollars have declined. In fact, despite difficult economic times, there is evidence of expansion in several areas within the Massachusetts life sciences sector.

These signs of growth and expansion directly and convincingly rebut the industry's claims that laws limiting the marketing influence of companies on physicians and doctors are bad for business in the state.

The bill does not prohibit or impact any contracted research and/or clinical trial engagements with physicians.

The bill does require open disclosure of such contracted partnerships. Disclosure will not prevent physicians from partnering with medical device or pharmaceutical firms to develop new products. It will simply make that interaction transparent and honest.

The legislation allows pharmaceutical companies to offer drug samples and for sales reps to visit providers' offices to provide information about their products and also to bring in light refreshment.

Senate bill 270 is a simple solution to a complex problem.