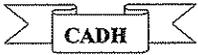


# CADH

## Connecticut Association of Directors of Health, Inc.



### PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Friday, March 12, 2010

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**Public Health**  
Prevent... Promote... Protect.

### RB 428 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH RELATED STATUTES

My name is Karen Spargo, I am the Director of Health for the Naugatuck Valley Health District and a member of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health. The Association opposes Sections 47 and 48 of Raised Bill 428 as they relate to the qualifications of a local health director. This bill would require any new Director to be BOTH an MD and have a degree in public health.

Last Legislative Session, the Governor established through Executive Order 26 a Council to advise her on issues related to our public health system. I served as a representative on the Council and during the Council's deliberations, one recommendation was to align the qualifications of a local health director so that those for a municipal director and a district director were the same. Under existing statute, the qualifications for municipal directors and district directors are different. It was never the intention of the Council to require local health directors to have BOTH an MD and a degree in public health.

We were told that this was an editing error, a simple "MISTAKE." We have no reason to doubt this given the significant ramifications the proposed language would create.

First, the graduate degree in public health or Masters in Public Health (MPH) is the recognized degree for public health professionals. There is considerable difference in the study of medicine and treatment of individuals with disease versus that of public health and prevention of disease among populations. Second, it is unconscionable to impose the salary requirement of an MD/MPH on municipalities at a time when the state has already cut support for local public health and the qualification requirement is unjustified. Third, any municipality needing to fill a health director position would be extremely hard pressed to find such candidates. According to UCONN, of the 38 dual degree candidates that have graduated from their program, none have gone into local public health practice in CT or elsewhere.

As a member of the Governor's Council the intention of this statutory language change was very SIMPLE, to align the qualifications of both District and municipal health directors to require the following:

- All local directors of health should hold a graduate degree in Public Health

**We have attached our specific recommendations for these changes to this testimony. We thank you in advance for correcting what was seemingly a simple editing error.**

## Suggested Language Changes

Sec. 47. Section 19a-200 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2010*):

(a) The mayor of each city, the warden of each borough, and the chief executive officer of each town shall, unless the charter of such city, town or borough otherwise provides, nominate some person to be director of health for such city, town or borough, which nomination shall be confirmed or rejected by the board of selectmen, if there be such a board, otherwise by the legislative body of such city or town or by the burgesses of such borough within thirty days thereafter. Notwithstanding the charter provisions of any city, town or borough with respect to the qualifications of the director of health, on and after October 1, 2010, any person nominated to be a director of health shall hold a graduate degree in public health. The educational requirements of this section shall not apply to any director of health nominated or otherwise appointed as director of health prior to October 1, 2010.

Sec. 48. Section 19a-244 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2010*):

On and after October 1, 2010, any person nominated to be the director of health shall hold a graduate degree in public health. The educational requirements of this section shall not apply to any director of health nominated or otherwise appointed as director of health prior to October 1, 2010.