

**Testimony of
John Satterfield, M.D
before the
Public Health Committee
on
Senate Bill 265
"An Act Requiring Health Care Providers To Display Photographic
Identification Badges"
March 1, 2010**

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is John Satterfield. I am a Board Certified Anesthesiologist, a practicing physician at The Hospital of Central Connecticut and Vice President of the Connecticut State Society of Anesthesiologists (CSSA). I come before you today in support of **Senate Bill 265, "An Act Requiring Health Care Providers To Display Photographic Identification Badges"**. CSSA welcomes the opportunity to comment to you today.

Many health care facilities today require staff to wear photo identification badges. They are used to identify doctors, nurses and other staff employees. This is crucial because photo identification badges serve as a critical part of a health care facility's overall security plan. Aside from personal identification, the cards can be used to control access to authorized areas of a facility. Badges are often color coded by department so that patients and visitors can easily identify staff members and distinguish their areas of expertise.

Visible identification badges provide patients with peace of mind, knowing they are being tended to by the appropriate medical professional. When we are sick we are privileged in this country to have access to the finest medical care. There are many people with many different skill sets who serve us as caregivers. Many people now serve as primary caregivers in individual settings including private offices, hospitals, emergency rooms and pharmacy clinics. **However, Connecticut does not require healthcare providers to wear identification badges when providing direct patient care.** Requiring healthcare providers to wear identification badges would enhance patient safety by reducing the potential for confusion.

We realize most facilities require personnel to wear name badges. The problem is that there is no consistency with where it is displayed or what information is written on it. Information is often too small to read at a conversational distance. The main point is that all health care facilities need to require identification badges that are clear and visible so that a patient understands who they are speaking to and who is caring for them.

Currently, there are eight states with identification badge requirements: Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, Georgia, Illinois, California, Minnesota, and Oregon. Also, Pennsylvania is currently considering legislation to require healthcare provider identification badges.

The Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations accredits health care organizations and programs throughout the country. The organization is expected to determine who requires identification and how the process is implemented. If the policy requires all staff to wear ID badges, then all staff (including Physicians) would need to comply.

I urge the committee to support SB 265. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak today.