

Testimony of the

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Connecticut ENT Society

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Connecticut Urology Society

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Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians

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Connecticut Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery Society

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Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons

**S. B. No. 265 An Act Requiring Health Care Providers to Display Photographic Identification Badges.**

Before the

**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

On

March 1, 2010

Good Morning, Senator Harris, Representative Ritter, and other distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, I am Todd Zachs and I am a board certified otolaryngologist practicing in West Hartford. I am here today to represent more than 1400 physicians in a variety of medical specialties in support of SB265.

While there are many differing opinions regarding the direction healthcare should go in Connecticut today, there is no question that seeking healthcare has become an increasingly complex process for patients. Long gone are the days when people went to their local general practitioner who was either a trained internist or family practitioner and was well known as such in the community. Gone, too, are the days of physicians wearing crisp white coats with a name prominently embroidered on their breast.

Instead, when today's patient presents for a medical visit they are likely to encounter multiple staff members and healthcare providers who have different levels of training and expertise. This is especially true in hospital and medical clinics, where patients often are seeking emergent or extended care for a medical problem. While we all strive to introduce ourselves by name and position, with so many new faces and with typical patient anxiety regarding their health, names and roles are often forgotten. This puts our patients at a great disadvantage.

We as healthcare providers have all the advantage-the patient's name and identification are printed in the chart to which we can easily refer and we of course know our medical qualifications. In many instances the patient hears our verbal identification and then most likely will become too embarrassed to ask us again our name or our role. It is generally accepted that confusion over provider and staff identities can adversely affect the patient's care and understanding of their health. SB265 helps to remedy this problem and provides the means to standardize and simplify the identification process of healthcare providers when they interact with patients. We also believe that requiring the degree and specialty of the provider on the badge is vital to the identification process.

In closing, some institutions and even some of our colleagues may object to having another, even small, cost added to the healthcare delivery system, but we believe that the price of creating the identification badges called for by this bill will be far outweighed by the improvements in patient comfort and understanding, and greater efficiency of care it will achieve and it will demonstrate the commitment healthcare professionals have to improving this transparency in all areas of the delivery system.