



**Testimony of
Melodie Peters, 1st Vice President
AFT CONNECTICUT**

**Program Review and Investigations Committee
Scope of Practice Determination for Health Care Professions**

February 25, 2010

AFT Connecticut is a statewide labor union that represents more than 6,000 healthcare workers in public and private sector hospitals, clinics, home health agencies and schools throughout the state. These workers are registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, advance practice nurses, technicians, technologists, therapists, researchers, aides, clerical personnel and maintenance and service workers. It is on behalf of these AFT members that I submit my remarks today.

AFT Connecticut understands that scopes of practice for health care professionals may need to be modified over time. Training, education, technology and the needs of health care institutions frequently change and practitioners are required to adjust accordingly. The current practice of defining scopes of practice in statute and amending them through the legislative process has allowed health care professionals and policy experts to share experiences and recommendations with the legislature. We strongly believe that this part of the process must be maintained and perhaps, enhanced.

While the legislative process can be slow and legislators, as part-time lawmakers, may not have in-depth knowledge about a particular practice area, the General Assembly, like no other entity, has the ability and the resources to gather input from relevant experts and stakeholders statewide.

As Senate Vice President to the Public Health Committee, I had the privilege and opportunity to convene a working group of stakeholders to craft major reform with respect to the Advance Practice Registered Nurse. (This was highlighted in the PRI

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staff findings under Key Points.) This process allows AFT Connecticut and other professional organizations an opportunity to participate in meaningful discussions and have input into what directly impacts their profession and its outcomes relative to quality.

AFT Connecticut can agree that some type of final process may be helpful in gathering and filtering information based on specific criteria. However, we believe that information should be presented to the Legislature and Committee of Cognisence for further discussion and action. We agree “that the process to determine scopes of practice should remain within the Legislature’s purview, allowing policymakers control over the range of services licensed health care professionals may provide.”

AFT Connecticut appreciates the criteria presented for request for change to the Scope of Practice and the proposed make up of the Scope of Practice Review Committee.

Thank you for this thoughtful report and opportunity to comment.

Melodie Peters
First Vice President - AFT Connecticut
Retired State Senator