

Lisa Nowak RN MSN
555 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06110
860-521-4021

Lisa.Nowak@comcast.net
Association of School Nurses of Connecticut

Testimony on Raised Bill 929
AAC The Qualification Requirements of School Nurses

Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann and Members of the Education
Committee,

I am a registered nurse for more than 30 years, and a school nurse for 15 years. I am currently President of the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut (ASNC) and a member of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). I support the legislature's willingness to address the qualifications of school nurses. The legislature has made no changes to the qualifications of schools nurses since 1982. During that time, the profession of nursing and the specialty practice of school nursing have addressed the education needs of registered nurses. Diploma programs for registered nurses have been eliminated in favor of college level programs in nursing. The number of Master's and Doctoral Level Programs for nurses have increased. NASN has made recommendations for school nursing through position statements, legislative advocacy and professional development programs for school nurses. The National Board of Certified School Nurses requires a baccalaureate degree and three years of school nurse employment to sit for the Certification Exam which recognizes the registered nurse as an expert in school nursing, not the entry level certification you may be familiar with for other education professionals. School nurses recognize the changing needs of students in both general education and special education and their professional responsibility to continually update their knowledge and skills in order to be a competent registered nurse who provides a safe and effective health services program for all students.

As discussed by my colleagues today, Raised Bill 929 AAC The Qualification Requirements of School Nurses is a step in the right direction. However I have reservations about the specific language of the bill as discussed by my colleague Patricia

Krin. (Ms Krin failed to mention in her testimony that she is also a Past President of ASNC and a former Director of NASN. She currently serves as the CT Liaison to the National Board of Certification for School Nurses).

I would support Raised Bill 929 with the language change discussed by Ms Krin. It is important that as the health needs of Connecticut students increase, the economic distress of the nation continues and the potential nursing shortage looms, that we continue to stand for competent health care for our students. Connecticut students and families deserve school nurses who have the education, knowledge and skills to provide comprehensive school health services that acknowledge, respect and integrate the link between student health and academic success.