

Testimony of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health
In Support of House Resolution
Re Dr. Jewel Mullen to be Commissioner of Public Health

February 3, 2011

Good morning, distinguished Co-Chairs and Members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. My name is Patrick McCormack, and I am President of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health, or "CADH," and Director of the Uncas Health District, serving the towns of Bozrah, Griswold, Lisbon, Montville, Norwich, Sprague, and Voluntown. CADH is a nonprofit organization comprised of Connecticut's 77 local health departments and districts. It works to strengthen and assure efficient and effective delivery of public health services. Since it was incorporated in 1996, CADH has and continues to convene, engage, mobilize, and support Connecticut's local health departments and districts in establishing healthier Connecticut communities. Local health directors are the statutory agents of the Commissioner of Public Health and are critical providers of essential public health services at the local level in Connecticut.

It is our pleasure to support the appointment of Dr. Jewel Mullen as Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Dr. Mullen has a proven track record of strong, decisive, and visionary leadership. As Director of the Bureau of Community Health and Prevention at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Dr. Mullen championed the importance of prevention, the cornerstone of public health practice. As medical director at the Baystate Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center, Dr. Mullen participated in early efforts to make the city more suitable for walking and other physical activity.

These achievements also demonstrate Dr. Mullen's strength as a collaborator. Local and state governmental public health, working in partnership and collaboration, is critical to making Connecticut a national leader and exemplar in public health. Connecticut's local health departments and districts, serving the state's 169 towns, are the Department of Public Health's "agents in the field," promoting health programs and policies that support good health; preventing disease outbreaks and conditions that give rise to poor health; and protecting people from health threats.

Dr. Mullen's experience in Massachusetts of providing strategic leadership during challenging fiscal circumstances is also critical to ensuring that all Connecticut residents, even in the face of statewide economic hardship, benefit from quality and cost-saving public health services. Those services are critical to support good health and to protect people from disease outbreaks and public health threats.

On behalf of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health, I am proud to support Dr. Jewel Mullen to lead the Department of Public Health. We commend Governor Malloy on selecting an individual of her caliber. Her confirmation is an important step toward ensuring that all Connecticut residents receive equal access to basic, comprehensive and competent public health services.