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Connecticut State Medical Society Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 5045 An Act Requiring Health Care Providers to Display Photographic Identification
Badges
Public Health Committee
February 9, 2011

Senator Stillman, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee, On behalf of the more than 7,000 physician and physician in training members of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS), thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today in support of House Bill 5045 An Act Requiring Health Care Providers to Display Photographic Identification Badges. At a time when healthcare services are becoming more integrated and an increasing number of healthcare providers are interacting independently with patients, clearly identifying the type of healthcare provider at point of contact is critical. This committee, as well as the State Senate, had the foresight last session to pass similar legislation.

The legislation before you today was amended by the Senate last year to add some additional clarity and ensure that it would not extend beyond the intended institutions and facilities in which multiple disciplines practice and into private offices such as those of physicians, dentists, podiatrists, etc. As these settings typically utilize a very limited number of disciplines, the confusion experienced at larger institutions does not exist and in fact implementing these at the practice level could lead to additional confusion instead of clarification. Therefore, we once again believe it is not the intent of proponents to capture these solo and small practice physician settings. We respectfully request that the attached language from last session's File Copy 77 be amended into the bill.

As the healthcare delivery system evolves, more categories of healthcare providers are engaging in direct contact with patients. These changes increase the need for providers to be clearly identified when interacting with patients. Often patients are overwhelmed and intimidated in healthcare settings. During this sensitive time there is no room for confusion or misunderstanding. Furthermore, it is important to increase patient understanding of who is providing medical care and their educational training and background. This can only be done through increased transparency and clarity in badge identification.

Most facilities and institutions in which multiple disciplines practice receive accreditation from a national accrediting entity such as the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation. Typically there is a requirement for identification procedures. It is imperative that ALL such facilities adopt and implement such procedures to clearly identify the license type of the professional providing services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 5045.