

Connecticut ENT Society
Connecticut Urology Society
Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians
Connecticut Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery Society

HB5045 AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO DISPLAY PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION BADGES DURING WORKING HOURS.

Testimony Before the Public Health Committee

On

February 9, 2011

Good Morning, Senator Stillman, Representative Ritter, and other distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, I am Denis Lafreniere, M.D. and I am a board certified otolaryngologist practicing in Farmington, CT at the UCONN Health Center. I am here today to represent more than 1200 physicians in a variety of medical specialties in **support** of HB 5045 AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO DISPLAY PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION BADGES DURING WORKING HOURS.

While there are many differing opinions regarding the direction healthcare should go in Connecticut today, there is no question that seeking healthcare has become increasingly complex 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 throughout the community.

When today's patients present 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 hospitals and facilities, where patients often seek emergent or extended care. While we all strive to introduce ourselves by name and position, patients (who are often anxious regarding their health) meet so many new faces that names and roles are often forgotten.

The modern array of healthcare personnel can be bewildering. Patients may not know who is treating them. Was that a physician or a nurse or technician? If it was a nurse, was it a Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, Nurse's Aide, or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse? Or was it a physician or physician's assistant? Who is recommending treatment and providing me care? Where is the medical doctor?

We, as healthcare providers, already have patients identified. We can easily refer to the chart for the patient's name and identification. In a facility, patients have wrist bands we use for identification purposes. Why shouldn't patients get the same privilege?

It is generally accepted that confusion over provider and staff identities can adversely affect the patient's care and understanding of their health issues. HB5045 helps to remedy this problem and provides the means to standardize and simplify the identification process when healthcare providers interact with patients. We also believe that requiring the provider's degree and specialty training on the badge is vital to the identification process so the patient knows who is caring for them.

In closing, some institutions, and even some of our colleagues may object to additional costs, however small, but we believe the improvements in patient comfort and understanding, and the greater efficiency of care it will achieve will far

outweigh the cost of these identification badges. It will also demonstrate the commitment of healthcare professionals to improving transparency in all areas of the health care delivery system.

Thank you for your consideration and for raising this important consumer protection bill.