



Danbury Nurses' Union Unit #47 Local 5047

AFT-CT, AFT Healthcare, AFL- CIO

1 Padanaram Road Suite 145 Danbury, CT 06811 (203) 748-4774

FAX (203) 748-2988 E-mail unit47@aol.com <http://ct.aft.org/unit47>

Written Testimony of

Mary Consoli, President

Danbury Nurses' Union Unit #47, AFT Local 5047, AFL-CIO

**To Representative Betsy Ritter, Senator Andrea Stillman
and Members of the Public Health Committee**

**Re: H. B. No 5048 (Comm) An Act Requiring Certification of Need Approval for the
Termination of Inpatient and Outpatient Services by a Hospital**

February 8, 2011

The Danbury Nurses Union, Unit #47 AFT Local 5047 is a labor union representing 600 registered nurses at Danbury Hospital, Western Connecticut Health Care. As President, I am submitting these remarks to support HB 5048, to repeal a Certificate of Need "reform" that was passed last session. Currently, hospitals do not have to apply for a CON to change in order to terminate a service. HB 5048 would change that and require a CON approval before service termination.

Danbury Hospital is part of a regional healthcare delivery system that services the majority of the Western Connecticut area. The people in this area rely on the services of the hospitals in this catchment area to provide needed services for their well being. Any cut in services would lead to a decrease in their health and well being. If services are cut without approval, there may not be a provider in the area to care for the people who avail themselves of the services offered by Danbury Hospital or New Milford Hospital, which is also part of Western Connecticut Healthcare.

Any cut in service may mean that people would have to travel out of the area to be treated. They may not have transportation available to them to travel to a facility outside the Danbury-New Milford area. They may not have family or friends that could bring them to another facility. There is limited public transportation, and the cost of a taxi may be prohibitive. For example if a Renal Dialysis patient had to go to Bridgeport for a dialysis treatment, he/she may have to be transported by ambulance. This would not be a cost effective measure.

An approval process would allow the State to ensure that whatever services the hospital(s) plans to cut, would be available to the people of this area by another agency.

Without this approval process, cost cutting measures may be instituted by hospitals that would not be in the best interest of the people for whom they are to provide services. As we move to health care reform there is much uncertainty, but one sure fact is, that cost cutting measures are going to be instituted to keep the hospital solvent. This should not be done to the detriment of the people who need to receive medical treatment.

So I urge you to vote in support of H.B. 5048 that would require a hospital to apply for a Certificate of Need to terminate a service.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mary Consoli, RN, BSN
President
Danbury Nurses' Union Unit #47
AFT Local 5047, AFL-CIO
1 Padanaram Rd.
Danbury, CT 06811