

Connecticut Epilepsy Advocate, Inc.
20 Salem Walk
Milford, CT 06460-7132
(203) 874-8731
ctepilepsy@optonline.net

March 10, 2011

ATTN: Connecticut Public Health Committee Members

Chairwoman Boukus, Chairman Lesser and your fellow Public Health Committee Members. Enclosed is my testimony for: "House Bill 5610-An Act Concerning The Duties Of A Pharmacist When Filling A Prescription Used For The Treatment Of Epilepsy Or Prevention Of Seizures". I will try my best to be in Hartford to testify however if I am unable to do so I am submitting it now and requesting it please put it on record.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A. Fiore,
President and Founder

Connecticut Epilepsy Advocate

...Progress Through Awareness

www.ct-ea.org

The Connecticut Epilepsy Advocate, Inc. is a recognized 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Organization.

**Written Testimony of
Robert A. Fiore
Connecticut Epilepsy Advocate, Inc.
March 11, 2011
Joint Committee on Public Health**

House Bill 5610-An Act Concerning The Duties Of A Pharmacist When Filling A Prescription Used For The Treatment Of Epilepsy Or Prevention Of Seizures.

My name is Robert Fiore. I am the President and Founder of the Connecticut Epilepsy Advocate, Inc. which is a recognized 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Organization. For the record I am a resident of Milford and I have Epilepsy my entire life.

Senate Bills with various titles and numbers regarding this are on record for over five years. Sadly the passage of any of them has not come to fruition.

Since the summer of 2006 my medications for Epilepsy have been filled with a brand that was not safe for me to use. This happened to me four different times since then and the ill effects were both hard to deal with and are very dangerous. Each time it took days to resolve this issue and I had to pay out of pocket to get the correct prescription brand. This is an ongoing issue that faces many of the approximately sixty thousand people in Connecticut who live with Epilepsy.

Substitution without Consent is Dangerous. This is why under current law, unless a patient's physician writes: "Brand Medically Necessary" or "Brand Prescribed by Doctor" the pharmacist does not have to dispense the exact medication the physician has requested which is safe for the patient. It should be mandatory that they do. Why should we have to go through this? Helping or controlling a person's life with the proper medication should not be based on the profit a drug company makes because human lives are priceless.

In conclusion I strongly urge you to pass this bill, which would require pharmacists to inform us and our physicians when switching medications from the Brand Prescribed by the Doctor and not to the brand chosen by the various drug companies. This will help not only myself, but can potentially help the approximately sixty thousand people here in Connecticut who have Epilepsy. The many previous requests to pass Bills like this one should tell each of you its severity, thus the passage of this one is paramount.

I thank you for your time today and I will gladly answer any questions should you have them for me.

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