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My name is Jean Rexford and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Center for Patient Safety. We are a non-profit member-driven organization with a sole mission to improve patient safety protocols in hospitals and physicians' offices. We have several hundred members across Connecticut, most of whom have been victims themselves, or have family members who have been victims, of serious medical negligence.

We applaud the hard work by many, many dedicated people who have developed the Sustinet plan. I myself had the honor to serve on the Sustinet Quality and Patient Safety Subcommittee; and I am very proud of our collective efforts during the past couple of years.

The Connecticut Center for Patient Safety supports the overall framework of House Bill 6305. As we move forward in the process, I am hoping that the bill will include stronger provisions relating to patient safety benchmarks and requirements. I also hope that, as recommended in the report, a special patient safety committee will be appointed – making important recommendations as we move forward.

Section 13 limits liability if a Sustinet physician is using a standard of care that is recommended by a committee made up of clinicians. I think that needs to be broadened and include scientists, researchers and public members and public health representatives. I think this is one area in which financial conflicts of interest cannot be permitted. Limiting access to our courts is probably not a proven way to improve the overall safety of the patient population. Transparency and accountability work and keep Connecticut's patient population as safe as possible when receiving health care."

Connecticut Center for Patient Safety respectfully request the Members of the General Assembly to add language to House Bill 6305 that very clearly and strongly shows that one of the primary goals of the Sustinet Plan is to ensure that every possible effort is being made to have patients and healthcare providers work collaboratively to develop systems to decrease medical errors, decrease hospital-based infections, decrease wrong-site surgeries, etc.

The Sustinet Plan can and will only be successful if healthcare patients and their families have absolute confidence in that the care being provided is as good as it possibly can be.

