

**Testimony of the American Lung Association in
Connecticut in Support of Raised Senate Bill No. 415,
An Act Concerning State Oversight of Hookah Lounges**

45 Ash St.
East Hartford, CT 06108
Tel: (860) 289-5401
Fax: (860) 289-5405

1-800-LUNG USA
lungne.org

Chair

David G. Hill, MD (Middlebury)

Vice Chair

Karen P. Conway, Esq. (S.
Glastonbury)

Secretary

Pamela Peck (Woodbury)

Fariba Alim-Marvasti (Glastonbury)

Craig S. Conoscenti, MD (Norwalk)

Theodore M. Doolittle, Esq. (W.
Hartford)

Thomas J. Godar, MD (Bloomfield)

Sonda Hunter (Meriden)

Fran M. Kochman (Old Saybrook)

Carol T. Krantz (Glastonbury)

Judith A. Levi (Rocky Hill)

Jack K. Plummer, PhD (Glastonbury)

Jane Z Reardon, MSN, RN (Granby)

Paula L. Richer (Wethersfield)

Hossein Sadeghi, MD (Stamford)

Eugene W. Skladnowski (Wethersfield)

Regina Stankaitis, PHR (Wethersfield)

Jeffrey T. Stein, CFP (Avon)

John Victory (Farmington)

John J. Votto, DO (New Britain)

March 2, 2011

Public Health Committee
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and Members of
the Public Health Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Raised Senate Bill No.
415, An Act Concerning State Oversight of Hookah Lounges. My
name is Dawn Mays-Hardy and I serve as the Connecticut
Director of Health Promotion and Public Policy for the American
Lung Association.

The American Lung Association appreciates that the Public
Health Committee raised this bill and strongly believes that this
legislation is necessary to protect the public health. However,
we would request that the committee consider going further and
modify existing statutory language to include hookah lounges
and waterpipe tobacco use.

Hookah lounges are a growing trend and existing research
warns hookah smoking poses similar if not greater health risks
than cigarette smoking. A recent American Lung Association
report, *An Emerging Deadly Trend - Waterpipe Tobacco Use
(2007)*, included disturbing results about carcinogen exposure
levels when using a waterpipe and perceptions among youth
about the safety of waterpipe tobacco use.

A typical waterpipe tobacco session lasts an hour, making it
equivalent to smoking 5 packs of cigarettes. The tobacco used
in waterpipes is often enhanced with flavors that act as
smoothing agent and mask the harshness of tobacco smoke.
This makes hookah smoking more appealing for young people
and college kids, who are the target market for hookah lounges.

The FDA has echoed this viewpoint in their recent findings concerning flavored cigarettes.

Waterpipe tobacco use can also serve as a gateway to cigarette smoking. Teens were eight times more likely to experiment with cigarettes if they had ever used a hookah. Research has also shown that there are significant misconceptions among college kids about the safety of hookah smoking, especially when compared with cigarette smoking.

We value your deep commitment to advancing strong policies that protect health and urge you to revise the language in Raised Bill No. 415. Again, thank you for this opportunity.

Dawn Mays-Hardy, MS
CT Director Health Promotion and Public Policy
American Lung Association in Connecticut