

Written Testimony of
Charles R. Nash III, President
Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut
Friday, March 11, 2011
Public Health Committee

Good morning Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, Senator Welch, Representative Perillo and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in support of Committee Bill # 5610.

My name is Charles Nash, President of the Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut. I am a life long resident of Connecticut and have lived in Manchester with my family for the last 25 years. I am the father of 5 children. Two of my sons have a seizure disorder. Our family has worked long and hard attempting to keep our boys as seizure free as possible in order to maintain a semblance of normalcy to their lives. At times the battle has been difficult.

One of our son's, Andrew, has seizures that are difficult to control. His medication regime is delicately balanced in an attempt to achieve a seizure-free existence. It has taken several years with numerous drug trials and medication combinations in order to obtain his present seizure-free status. This achievement is in jeopardy if Andrew's medications are tampered with in any way. It has truly been a team effort between our sons, and their neurologist that have finally achieved a seizure free life for our boys.

We are not alone in our struggle!

For the more than 60,000 people in Connecticut with epilepsy, medication is the most common and most cost effective treatment for controlling and/or reducing seizures. This legislation simply requires pharmacists to receive the consent of a patient and their physician before switching from one manufacturer of a generic to another manufacturer of the same generic drug. The substitution of generic drugs without receiving consent could have dire and potentially life threatening consequences to people with epilepsy. Physicians and people living with epilepsy may spend many years finding the right dosage and combinations of antiepileptic medications to prevent the occurrence of seizures. A small change in a patient's regiment and dosage of antiepileptic medications could easily upset the delicate balance needed to prevent seizures

Andrew hopes to one day be granted his driver's license. Please do not jeopardize his dream.

I urge you to support this bill -- for Andrew and for all of the other people in Connecticut who need this protection.