

**Testimony of
State Representative Michelle Cook
before the
Public Health Committee
February 9, 2011**

**House Bill 5045 “An Act Requiring Health Care Providers to Display
Photographic Identification Badges During Work Hours”**

Senator Stillman, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee, I am State Representative Michelle Cook from Torrington’s 65th Assembly District. I am here today as a supporter and co-sponsor of **House Bill 5045, “An Act Requiring Health Care Providers to Display Photographic Identification Badges During Work Hours.”**

It is important for health care employees who provide direct patient care to wear a photographic identification badge that includes the name of the health care facility, the name of the health care provider, and their type of license or job title. Several other states have adopted requirements similar to this one.

There are many, many people with different areas of expertise who act as caregivers in hospitals, emergency rooms, clinics and private offices. Currently, most medical personnel in Connecticut wear identification badges. This serves the purpose of allowing health care providers to easily identify one another. They also help to keep medical facilities safe and secure. However, these identification badges tend to vary greatly from one medical facility to another. This bill mandates that badges must be clear and easy to read, as well as uniform throughout the state. This is crucial as many identification badges use small fonts and are difficult to read quickly.

I believe a uniform standard will offer comfort to the sick and elderly who are at times unaware of who is truly providing treatment to them. By identifying their health care provider, patients will know they are receiving care from a trained professional, adding to their feeling of security.

This bill will provide an extra layer of safety within a medical facility that benefits both the patient and the employer. By requiring health care providers to wear badges, medical professionals as well as patients would be able to recognize unauthorized visitors quickly and easily. Without uniform identification badges, it would be more difficult to determine a person's identity and quickly realize whether or not their presence is authorized.

I urge the committee to support HB 5045. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this issue.