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TESTIMONY: H.B. 5348 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL NURSES AND SCHOOL MEDICAL  
ADVISORS  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
MARCH 5, 2012

Good afternoon Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA), the professional organization for registered nurses in Connecticut. I am Mary Jane Williams PhD., RN, current chairperson of the Government Relations Committee and Professor Emeritus, Central Connecticut State University.

I am providing testimony on

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Children, well and some with multiple exceptionalities spend their day in a variety of educational settings. Many of these young children have physical and mental issues, these issues are further complicated by the educational settings and a growing number and variety of social issues. The social challenges add another dimension to the educational environment. In order for children to learn and be successful depends on the student's ability to feel safe, and unthreatened.

School Nurses work in these complex environments and are faced with multiple challenges every day. Their overriding goal is to keep children healthy, in school and performing successfully. Schools with the proper ratio of school nurses to children have less absenteeism and student performance is enhanced. In a state that is challenged by student performance one part of the puzzle that can lead to success is the provision of qualified nurses in adequate numbers as defined by the National Association of School Nurses.

The National Association of School Nurses further defines school nursing as:

A specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success, and lifelong achievement of students. To that end, school nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety; intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services; and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning ([www.NSNA.org](http://www.NSNA.org)).

### **SCHOOL MEDICAL ADVISORS**

Multiple references are made throughout this proposed legislation to the School Medical Provider. However, the credentials of this proposed School Medical Advisor are never provided. In order to make any decision related to this proposed legislation it is essential this provider's education, qualification's, licensure's and experience are clearly delineated as part of the proposed legislation. It is essential that the qualifications are congruent with current standards and scopes of practice.

Support of this legislation hinges on the clear definition of School Medical Advisor.

Thank you,

Mary Jane M. Williams, PhD., R.N.