

Statement Before  
The Environment Committee  
Wednesday, February 22, 2012

**Re: SB 92: An Act Concerning the Disposal and Collection of Unused Medications**

Good Afternoon Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee. My name is Margherita Giuliano. I am a pharmacist and the Executive Vice President of the Connecticut Pharmacists Association. The Connecticut Pharmacists Association (CPA) is a professional organization representing 1,000 pharmacists in the state of Connecticut. I am submitting written testimony in opposition to SB 92: AAC the Disposal and Collection of Unused Medications.

The issue of properly disposing unused medications is not a new issue. With the increased public awareness of teenage abuse of prescription medications and access to parents and grandparents unused medications, as well as the contamination of our water systems, the Connecticut Pharmacists Association has been very aggressive in providing information to the public and to our pharmacies about the proper disposal of prescription medications. These efforts seem to be having an impact.

Over the past few years, CPA has been working closely with the Department of Consumer Protection to promote and encourage the proper disposal of medications. Many pharmacies in the state coordinated drug take back days in their pharmacies through DCP and their local law enforcement. Due to the media spotlight on this issue, the DEA has also scheduled and advertised national drug take back days that have yielded an impressive amount of medications returned. CPA makes this information available to our members through our newsletters and e-blasts. This year's National Drug Take Back Day is scheduled for April 28, 2012, and we are already promoting it to our pharmacists.

The absence of any coordination with the Department of Consumer Protection in this proposed bill language is a concern to the Connecticut Pharmacists Association. The DCP regulates pharmacies and oversees the entire drug distribution system in the state. Currently, DCP has expanded a pilot program where the agency coordinated the placement of lockboxes in the police departments of several communities so that people can anonymously drop off unused medications. This voluntary system is working well. In addition, many pharmacists have organized these drug take back days in their communities and involved various elements of their communities. This has the dual goal of collecting and also raising awareness in a community.

At a time when the Administration is advocating reduced government and increased efficiency, it is our opinion that this legislation is unnecessary. The voluntary programs are working well, and this proposed bill does not fully define the potential costs or where the burden falls as to who will be incurring those costs. I can state unequivocally that the pharmacy industry as a whole, and the pharmacies specifically, are not in a position to incur the costs.

Collaborating with the DCP to expand and improve the existing programs in place to increase the collection of unused medications would be a much better use of time and resources.