



**Connecticut State Medical Society
Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Physicians
Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons
Testimony on SB 260 An Act Concerning Expansion of the License Fee Waiver for Certain
Retired Physicians**

**Public Health Committee
March 7, 2012**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the more than 8,500 members of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) and the Connecticut Chapters of the American College of Physicians and American College of Surgeons, thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today in support of **SB 260 An Act Concerning Expansion of the License Fee Waiver for Certain Retired Physicians.**

As this committee is well aware, for years, CSMS has been promoting Connecticut's older and retired physicians as a possible resource in addressing the state's physician workforce shortage as well as a population of physicians that can help provide access to care to those most disadvantaged by the current health care system. Connecticut has the dubious distinction of having one of the oldest physician populations in the country. While much of this may be related to our access to care issues and ability to attract and retain younger physicians, we cannot ignore reality and we cannot ignore a physician population that wants to continue to contribute by providing medical care services to those that desperately are in need of this care.

Once a physician has received a license from a state, they tend to want to maintain that license and continue to contribute in whatever medical capacity they can. This generally requires retaining the appropriate license to practice medicine. Unfortunately, Connecticut boasts one of the highest medical licensing costs in the country at over \$560. This high-cost licensing structure is not only a financial burden for retired physicians, but prevents a state already handicapped in recruiting efforts from tapping into physician resources that already exist and are available, even if a few hours a week to provide improved access to medical care.

Any physician who is providing 100 hours of service and not receiving a private fee as reflected in this legislation should be afforded a waiver from the licensure fee that the state currently requires. This is only the waiver of a licensing fee; not a waiver from Continuing Medical Education requirements; nor a waiver from adhering to the standards associated with maintaining a medical license in Connecticut. While our organizations support this language to include local health departments, the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs, the Coast Guard clinics and Doctors without Borders, we ask that the state remove the word "Certain" from the title of the bill and finally extend this waiver of the licensure fee to the hundreds of retired physicians who still reside in Connecticut and who dedicate 100 hours of pro bono services to the health of our residents in other programs and settings. We believe the spirit of SB 260 is to encourage retired physicians to use their expertise for public service; therefore, all retired Connecticut physicians who do so should experience the same waiver of licensure fee.