

Testimony of Hope Kasper: Common Council, Middletown CT

Opposing HB 5434

March 16, 2012. Public Health Committee

Distinguished members of the Public Health Committee

Healthcare harm continues to be a serious problem. Dr. Lucian Leape, the grandfather of patient safety, compared it to a jumbo jet crashing every single day. What he meant was that that is exactly how many people die from preventable medical error in our country. The demand for accountability and change does not seem to be commensurate with the size of the problem. Interest groups say they are working on making changes, that change is slow, that errors happen and that everyone is doing their best.

Well, they are not. I have two grandchildren who lost their mother because she got an infection following a c-section delivering her second little boy. When the CT Center for Patient Safety, and I am a Board member, began work ten years ago, everyone said that infections happened- it was the cost of doing business. Today, as a state, we can feel very positive about the state and federal initiatives that are beginning to prevent infections from happening.

Doctors, hospitals, emergency rooms cannot just give up and say they cannot do better. They can. With focus, leadership, some hospitals are making important transitions and transformations.

Please, do not support this legislation that would do nothing to improve the quality of care.