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**Connecticut State Medical Society Testimony in Opposition to
House Bill 5906 An Act Concerning Prescriptions for Controlled Substances And Use Of
the Connecticut Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System
General Law Committee
February 7, 2013**

Senator Doyle, Representative Baram and members of the General Law Committee, on behalf of the more than 7,000 physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today in opposition to House Bill 5906 An Act Concerning Prescriptions for Controlled Substances and the Use of the Connecticut Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System.

CSMS strongly supported the establishment of the State's Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System (PMRP). Furthermore, in addition to working closely with the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) during its development and implementation, CSMS has continued to work with and communicate regularly with DCP to promote its use. In addition, CSMS has had for decades, a committee that develops information, education and tools and resources for physicians associated with controlled substances and their use and abuse. However, mandating the PMRP for every prescription of a controlled substance prescribed by a physician would be administratively burdensome and cost and time prohibitive and would have chilling effect on necessary and needed pain management treatment.

CSMS supports the requirement that physicians register for the program when obtaining or renewing their Connecticut medical license if it was available tied to license renewal. This would provide a system in which all physicians receive important educational information and updates about the system and its intended use. However, we strongly oppose mandating its use for each and every prescription of a controlled substance by a physician for the care and treatment of patients in need of these services and associated medications.

Physicians, in particular those who provide regular care for the management and treatment of pain, are trained to identify situations in which patients may be misusing prescriptions or simply "doctor shopping." In fact, CSMS, in working with various local and national medical specialty societies, for the last few years, has engaged in educational sessions and programs designed to further educate and inform physicians about the use and misuse of controlled substances. These programs have included local and national experts, as well as the federal and state officials. In

addition, physicians are trained in responsible prescribing as part of established standards of care within their respective specializations.

Physicians are at the front of the line when it comes to concerns about the increasing problem of misuse of controlled substances in our society. However, in many situations, because of the complexity of pain management and the prescribing of controlled substances, patients experiencing pain may go untreated and patients may suffer. Establishing a mandate that would further adversely impact efforts to manage pain treatment is not in the best interest of our patients.

CSMS and our members offer our continued assistance to ensure the successful use of the PMRP and to identify and reduce the misuse of controlled substance through aggressive education and information. However, we offer that HB 5906, mandating the use of the program in every situation of medical treatment when controlled substances are prescribed, is not the right step in that direction and may do more to restrict access to medically necessary care than identify misuse or abuse.

Please oppose HB 5906 so that proper access to medical treatment for those experiencing pain continues in Connecticut.