



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

FTR

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE
COMMITTEE
February 26, 2013**

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**Senate Bill 956 - An Act Concerning Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric
Disorder Associated With Streptococcal Infections**

The Department of Public Health provides the following information with regard to Senate Bill 956.

Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcal Infections (PANDAS) was first described in 1998. In the United States, research on this disorder is led by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). In 2012, medical researchers from the NIMH, Yale University, and Johns Hopkins University defined a new syndrome called Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS), which includes PANDAS. PANS affects children and teens that suddenly develop on-again/off-again obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) or abnormal eating behaviors, along with other psychiatric symptoms without any known cause. This is a mental health disorder affecting children and does not fall within the purview of the Department of Public Health. Furthermore, the Department of Public Health does not have staff with subject matter expertise related to this disorder.

Additionally, this bill would require the Department to develop programs to educate practitioners and the general public and to promote research on pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder associated with streptococcal infections. Such programs would be required to include: (1) clinical awareness programs for physicians and informational outreach programs for teachers and the general public; (2) epidemiological studies within this state; (3) the establishment of a panel consisting of experts in the clinical and research communities in the diagnosis, care and treatment of PANDAS to assist with the development of practice guidelines for such diagnosis, care and treatment in this state; and (4) the establishment of a state liaison with the National Institute of Mental Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These programs would create a significant fiscal impact to the Department, particularly since the Department is currently without staff with the relevant expertise to properly administer such programs.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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