

Daniel Greene, M.D
Before the Judiciary Committee
On April 1, 2013
H.B. No. 6687 AN ACT CONCERNING CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

Good afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Daniel Greene and I am a third-year resident physician at Yale University currently pursuing training in ophthalmology. I am here today to respectfully urge members of the committee to oppose **HB 6687 An Act Concerning Certificates of Merit**.

As a medical student, I embarked on residency interviews across the country three years ago. My travels brought me to wonderful cities like Nashville, Chicago, San Diego, and New Haven, Connecticut. In order to match into a residency program, my classmates and I were required to painstakingly weigh each program's strengths and weakness, and to ultimately rank them. Among several other options, Yale University landed at the top of my list because of its strong faculty and the presence of nearby family members.

However, as my fellow residents and I approach the completion of our training, we must consider novel factors in preparing for the next stage in medicine—employment as attending physicians. With typical medical school debt ranging from \$150,000-\$200,000, young doctors are looking to practice in places that require less medical liability coverage and minimize the potential of frivolous lawsuits. Financial considerations aside, malpractice lawsuits have become very time-consuming for doctors. A recent New York Times article claims that I should expect to spend four or more years of my career working through one or several lawsuits. My peers and I have been trained by attending physicians who have been stunned and overwhelmed by the malpractice side of medicine, and I believe that this upcoming generation of young physicians will look to avoid highly litigious areas.

After nearly two years of ophthalmology residency, I now have a full appreciation for the hyper-specialized nature of medicine that exists today. Within our field of ophthalmology, for example, patients are frequently referred to retina, cornea, and glaucoma specialists that are able to keep up with current literature and offer the best possible standard of care for their respective disciplines. The certificate of merit in its current form supports and acknowledges this specialization of medicine.

I feel very fortunate to be training at Yale and have enjoyed my time in Connecticut. This state offers many attractive opportunities for my family, and I will strongly consider practicing here in the near future. As during my residency interviews, however, I will search broadly for an ophthalmology practice, but this time around, I must consider avoiding states with laws that jeopardize the ability to practice medicine without fear of frivolous malpractice suits. I do not believe that mine is a unique consideration, and would urge members of the justice committee to be mindful of this while deliberating on **HB 6687**.