



**American  
Red Cross**

Connecticut Blood Services Region

**American Red Cross  
Statement to the Committee on Public Health  
State of Connecticut General Assembly– Proposed Bill 5732  
February 27, 2013**

***Testimony of Paul Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer  
American Red Cross - Connecticut Blood Services Region***

Chairpersons Representative Susan Johnson, Senator Terry Gerratana and Members of the Committee on Public Health:

I am **Paul Sullivan**, Chief Executive Officer, American Red Cross – Connecticut Blood Services Region. I am here today in opposition to Proposed Bill Number 5732 which would require licensed nurses at blood drives. The Red Cross opposes this bill because such a requirement is not necessary to maintain donor safety, which is at the core of our mission, and would further erode our ability to operate efficiently in Connecticut by adding substantial costs.

The Red Cross plays a leading role in protecting the safety of donors and patients and increasing the availability of blood. Our costs are passed on to Connecticut hospitals, which are striving to fill their blood needs in a cost effective way. The Red Cross has an obligation to its hospitals to keep costs as low as possible. This year, in a difficult business environment, we renewed our contracts with all of our hospitals, with one still outstanding. We conducted a National Hospital Customer Survey which indicated that Connecticut hospitals would recommend American Red Cross Blood Services, ranked the Red Cross as a leader in Transfusion Medicine and perceived the American Red Cross as an organization they could trust and treats them as a valued customer. Having a healthy and sustainable blood program matters for Connecticut!

The Connecticut Region employs 299 full time employees. I hope to keep those jobs in Connecticut and create new jobs by working to increase blood donors in our state, reduce blood imports from out of state, and achieve self-sufficiency in Connecticut's blood supply, benefitting Connecticut hospitals and patients. This year in Connecticut, the American Red Cross will distribute over 150,000 units of red cells to the 30 acute care transfusing hospitals in Connecticut. Of this approximately 133,000 units are collected from Connecticut donors.

Requiring licensed nurses at blood drives would make it extremely difficult to operate a viable blood collection program in Connecticut. Requiring nurses at every blood drive would increase our costs, and may reduce blood collections in Connecticut and ultimately cost Connecticut jobs with no corresponding benefit to donor safety, which remains a top priority. This year, we are planning to increase the number of red cells we collect in Connecticut. Our goal is to continue this strong performance to best serve Connecticut hospitals and maintain jobs. Please support us in our efforts to continue this good work by opposing Proposed Bill No. 5732.