

Testimony by  
Ben Davol  
Head of Public Policy  
Thermo Fisher Scientific Immunodiagnostics Division  
On proposed bill  
HB 6241

Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Ben Davol and I am Head of Public Policy for Thermo Fisher Scientific's Immunodiagnostic Division.

Our Medical Director, Dr. Robert Reinhardt could not be here today. I am here in his place to offer some brief testimony on HB6241.

We applaud the committee's work to increase the State of Connecticut's efforts to control asthma.

As a company we support HB 6241 which follows the current NIH guidelines for the treatment of persistent asthmatics.

In the 2007 NIH Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma, four components are identified. One, Assessment and Monitoring. Two, Control of Environmental Triggers: Allergens and Inhalants. Three, Pharmacological Therapy. Four, Education and Self-Management.

HB 6241 concentrates on the second component, Control of Environmental Triggers. This component is sometimes lost in the plethora of medical information that primary care physicians must digest. NIH believes for proper asthma care all four components must be practiced.

Virtually every asthma control plan states that a key factor in asthma control is the identification of triggers. The only reliable way to do so, according to NIH, is through either skin or blood testing.

90% of children and 60% of adults with asthma have an allergic component that is the underlying factor. Thus identifying these triggers is critical to the control and management of asthma. Once the triggers are identified proper exposure reduction methods can be put in place.

Allergic disease is a tremendous cost to our health care system. For example, Allergic Rhinitis affects 35 million people per year and Asthma another 22 million.

Asthma alone adds 500,000 hospitalizations, 15 million office visits, and almost \$40 billion dollars to our health care bill each year. We can reduce these costs of asthma by emphasizing and adhering to the guidelines and components recommended by NIH.

With passage of HB 6241 the State of Connecticut will be supporting the NIH guidelines and continuing the state's already commendable approach to treatment and management of asthma.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to the committee's support of HB 6241.

I am happy to answer any questions.