



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## **TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE March 15, 2013**

*Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA, Commissioner, 860-509-7101*

### **House Bill 6521 – An Act Concerning Medical Orders For Life Sustaining Treatment**

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The Department of Public Health supports House Bill 6521.

In 1990, under Title 42 U.S.C. 1395 cc (a) of the Omnibus Reconciliation Act, Congress passed an amendment known as the Patient Self Determination Act which gives individuals the right to make their own health care decisions and to prepare advance directives (ADs). Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) is an adjunct to a formal written advance directive and will benefit Connecticut residents with life limiting illnesses or residents of an advanced age who wish to make their choices known, in exercising their rights and articulating their choices about the medical life sustaining treatments they will accept at the end of life.

The MOLST paradigm is an advanced care planning tool that uses a structured process of shared decision-making so patients can express preferences about probable medical interventions. The patient's preferences are then translated into an actionable medical order on a highly visible standardized form that travels with the patient across all care settings to ensure continuity of care. MOLST reflects the patient's current goals for medical decisions that s/he will likely confront within the near future. Currently there are 15 states with approved MOLST programs, 32 states including Connecticut with developing programs and three states without a program.

The bill gives the Department the authority to pilot test MOLST through a voluntary program that involves health care professionals and institutions in designated areas of the state. A pilot program will provide the opportunity to collect and analyze data on the use, effectiveness and limitations of MOLST. If the program is successful, the legislature may elect to implement the program statewide, through a comprehensive educational program that targets specific groups of health care providers.

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

*Phone: (860) 509-7269, Fax: (860) 509-7100  
Telephone Device for the Deaf (860) 509-7191  
410 Capitol Avenue - MS # 13GRE  
P.O. Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134  
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