

Testimony of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health

In Support of Governor's Senate Bill No. 848: An Act Implementing Provisions of the Budget Concerning Public Health

To the Distinguished Co-Chairs and Members of the Public Health Committee
March 15, 2013

Good afternoon, Distinguished Co-Chairs and Members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Karen Spargo and I am the President of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health (CADH) and the Director of the Naugatuck Valley Health District, serving the towns of Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Seymour, and Shelton.

CADH supports *Governor's Senate Bill 848: An Act Implementing Provisions of the Budget Concerning Public Health*. Specifically, Section 7 of Governor's Senate Bill 848 describes requirements around community health needs assessments, which hospitals are now required to conduct every three years, pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, amended as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. CADH applauds the language in Section 7(c) of Governor's Senate Bill 848, which states: "In developing the community benefit implementation strategy, the hospital organization shall consult with community-based organizations and stakeholders, and **local public health jurisdictions**, as well as any additional consultations the hospital decides to undertake [emphasis added]."

At the same time that non-profit hospitals are now required to conduct regular community health needs assessments, local health departments are preparing for a national accreditation process that requires them to conduct strategic planning, including a community health needs assessment and a community health improvement plan. CADH and the Connecticut Hospital Association have developed an innovative partnership to meet these goals. Together, they developed a model approach and tool to foster significant improvements in community health and health outcomes in Connecticut. Accordingly, we thank you for your inclusion of local public health jurisdictions as a listed partner in developing the community benefit implementation strategy.

Since this bill concerns implementation of budget provisions concerning public health, we would also like to express our appreciation that, recognizing the fiscal realities of the State, the Governor's proposed allocation to support municipal and district departments of health was level funded. To those who are also members of the Appropriations Committee, we urge you to maintain this funding.

In sum, CADH supports *Governor's Senate Bill 848: An Act Implementing Provisions of the Budget Concerning Public Health*. CADH is a nonprofit organization comprised of Connecticut's 74 local health departments and districts. Local health directors are the statutory agents of the Commissioner of Public Health and are critical providers of essential public health services at the local level in Connecticut. Thank you for your consideration.