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**TESTIMONY RE: S.B. 848 Sec 2. AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS OF THE BUDGET
CONCERNING PUBLIC HEALTH**

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

March 15, 2013

Good Afternoon, Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA) related to the S.B. 848 Sec 2 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS OF THE BUDGET CONCERNING PUBLIC HEALTH. I am Mary Jane Williams Ph.D., RN current chairperson of Government Relations Committee for the Connecticut Nurses Association and professor emeritus from Central Connecticut State University.

I speak in **STRONG** support of **S.B. 848 Sec 2. AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS OF THE BUDGET CONCERNING PUBLIC HEALTH**

The State of Connecticut of Connecticut is in a unique position. This revision has wide implications for the State and the State legislature. Approval of the request to increase licensing fees \$5.00 for Nursing Licensure in order to support mandated electronic licensure moves us one step closer to developing a renewal system that will allow the state to collect workforce data.

The Workforce Policy Board recommended that the State:

1. Collect and strategically utilize healthcare workforce data. It was recommended

that the State develop the capacity and infrastructure (and resources) to collect, analyze and make timely use of critical healthcare workforce-related data to support effective planning and informed decision-making concerning healthcare workforce policy, strategy and related investments.

2. Develop and ensure the funding necessary to sustain an internet-based healthcare workforce data portal to provide efficient and effective access to key information to inform strategy, planning, policy development and implementation, evaluation, etc.

3. Use the data collected in the portal to support the development of a strategic plan to ensure that the workforce matches employer needs and that the appropriate number and variety of programs exist to train the needed professionals.

4. Address pre-service and in-service training for stakeholders in the use of such data related to their agency and programs (Allied Health Workforce Board Annual Report to the Legislature, 2012).

Currently, we have scant if any data on the Health Care Workforce. We know total numbers but we do not have data related to age, education, specialty, license status, and/or current practice. It is impossible to predict need when we have no process in place to gather data. The Connecticut Nurses Association recommended that electronic licensure be conducted beginning in 1987. It has taken almost three decades to implement Electronic licensure. We need to act now! We need to move this legislation forward now. The changes in health care that will be implemented as a result of the "Affordable Health Care Act" demand that the State have the right number and mix of providers, with out Data, the State will be unable to meet the demand of providers across the spectrum of specialties required for the safe provision of care.

The Connecticut Nurses Association in collaboration with the Department of Public Health is working to implement a survey of Nurses as part of a Robert Wood Johnson Action Grant awarded to the Collaborative. This is a golden opportunity for the State. Mandated Electronic Licensure is essential to provide care across the age spectrum in all

settings. The minimum fee being requested will allow the State to maximize the work of all involved individuals and provide a potential wealth of information relative to workforce.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this request.

Mary Jane M. Williams PhD., RN