



Testimony on
House Bill 6238 An Act Concerning The Subject of Continuing Medical Education Courses
Public Health Committee
February 27, 2013

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Matthew Katz and I am the Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) and on behalf of the 8,700 physicians and physicians in training of the CSMS, Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Physicians and Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons, thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony to you today in opposition to House Bill 6238 AAC The Subject Of Continuing Medical Education Courses as we previously opposed Senate Raised bill 466 on the same topic.

First, in order to be completely transparent, CSMS is the recognized accreditor in Connecticut for continuing medical education (CME) under the guidance and stringent standards of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). Today, CSMS monitors, reviews, evaluates, and recognizes close to three dozen medical institutions (hospitals), quality review organizations and insurers to determine maintenance of standards of CME as outlined and approved by the ACCME as the national standard-setting organization. These recognized providers, called CME sponsors, provide the majority of ACCME-accredited, and this is very important, medical specialty board-recognized, CME in Connecticut. CME programming that meets national standards through ACCME and CSMS is planned to specifically address key areas of care and key topics of medical care quality.

There seems to be a great chasm between the reality of clinical practice and what is often proposed tied to physician licensure and continuing medical education (CME). Presently, Connecticut licensure requirements allow physicians to receive credit hours of clinical education (clinical education units) that does not meet the national ACCME standards. This creates a dichotomy between nationally recognized CME programs and approved medical specialty board credit hours -- and the local non-ACCME recognized medical education that does not meet national standards of peer review, conflicts of interest, quality review and is not recognized or allowed to satisfy national medical specialty boards and may not have any consistency with existing standards of medical education.

CSMS recognizes that the mandated subject areas are of great importance to patients and to physicians and we continue to support the CSMS-accredited and recognized sponsors in developing and providing these mandated topical/focus areas, as long as the CME is accredited, recognized and meets stringent quality review standards. However, CSMS is opposed to any new mandated subject areas of CME.

CSMS supports a variety of CME offerings that are consistent with national accreditation standards, but we also have to be careful not to diminish the level of the educational experience and the veracity of the monitoring and evaluation of accredited CME.

CSMS believes that education and evidence-based medicine are essentials of professional medical practice and that the proposed legislation would loosen the educational requirements for satisfying state requirements so that we know that if physicians are not taking the mandated topical requirements that are designed to address fundamental areas of medical practice, what is offered is relevant and relates to physicians providing the highest level of quality based medical care in Connecticut with the patient and community interests in mind.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments to you today. CSMS welcomes the opportunity to work with this committee; the Department of Public Health to create legislation that appropriately strengthens the quality of health care delivered in Connecticut and does not weaken continuing medical education.