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COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

I am writing in favor of Proposed Bill # 6238, An Act Concerning the Subject of Continuing Medical Education Courses. I am a Dermatologist from Westport, CT, an Asst. Clinical Professor in the Department of Dermatology at Yale New Haven Hospital, Vice President of the Fairfield County Medical Association, and President of the Women's Medical Association of Fairfield County – a branch of the American Medical Women's Association.

As a practicing physician in the State of CT, I am mandated by the state to take 5 specific 1 hour courses every other year. To date, I have done this 3 or 4 times. The basic message in these courses has not changed over time. There is no new data to learn. The doctors in our state get the message the first time they take the courses. There is no need for constant repetition.

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Doctors are already mandated to take 50 continuing education credits over a two year period. Let the doctor choose the topic for these credits. The legislators who mandated these courses certainly had good intentions. What they did not realize was that repetition of these subjects is not necessary. The 5 hours spent on these topics could be used to learn about topics relevant to each doctor's specialty. As a dermatologist there are new medications for serious cancers such as malignant melanoma and basal cell carcinoma that I need to learn about. I believe it is inappropriate to take time away from topics I deem critical for the care of my patients.

Subject matter in the sciences is constantly changing. Doctors need to keep up with this ever changing data to offer the best care for their patients. Keeping up with this literature is very time consuming. Five hours spent on learning new data is more beneficial for our patients than repeating the 5 topics discussed.

Doctors are very good at remembering information. Twenty five years ago I learned about the botfly. This is an insect indigenous to South America. The insect lays eggs on the skin which produce larva or worms. The larvae get under the skin and cause very painful skin bumps. After learning about the botfly 25 years ago I had a patient come to see me in Westport with a larva in their skin following a trip to Ecuador. Despite the fact that I had learned about this 25 years ago I was able to diagnose the condition and treat the patient appropriately.

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Doctors get it. We do not need courses repeated every other year to know how to manage a case of domestic violence or sexual assault. Once is enough.

I therefore propose that these 5 continuing education courses be taken once by all current and new physicians in the State of CT. The courses should not be repeated every other year.

Doctors get it. Doctors remember it. Once is enough.

Robin Oshman, MD, Vice President

Fairfield County Medical Association

