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**Testimony on**  
**House Bill 6594**  
**An Act Concerning Residential Care Homes And Definitions of Nursing Home Facility And**  
**Medical Review Committee**  
**March 20, 2013**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the almost 7,000 physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS), we are here today to provide this testimony on House Bill An Act Concerning Residential Care Homes and Definitions of “Nursing Home Facility” And “Medical Review Committee.”

In part, this proposed legislation seeks to change the definition of “medical review committee” in the context of medical peer review. CSMS must object to this proposed change as it will weaken the peer review privilege for medical professionals. The medical peer review process allows medical providers to discuss issues and concerns in an environment protected from legal disclosure. However, here in Connecticut, and around this country, we have seen a gradual weakening and evisceration of this peer review protection. Several legal challenges have been brought attacking peer review protection and many of those challenges have been successful. This proposed legislation attempts to broaden peer review by extending such peer review protection to any committee of a health care provider. Essentially, this would allow any health care provider to form a medical review committee for purposes of peer review. Under the context of this proposed change, a medical review committee could even consist of one medical provider, which would hardly constitute an effective peer review “committee.” To allow such a wide expansion of this privilege will weaken and undermine an already tenuous process. It is likely that many more suits will be brought challenging the peer review privilege which ultimately will further eviscerate this already delicate protection rendering it essentially meaningless in this state.

We ask for your support in opposing the change to the definition of “medical review committee.”