



**Testimony of Daniel Davidson
Judiciary Committee
12 March 2014**

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, members of the committee: thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. I write you as a resident of Hartford, a constituent of the 2nd Senatorial and 1st Congressional state districts, an intern at AIDS CT, and a student at the UCONN School of Social Work.

I would like to express my support for Raised Bill 5487 **AN ACT PROVIDING IMMUNITY TO A PERSON WHO ADMINISTERS AN OPIOID ANTAGONIST TO ANOTHER PERSON EXPERIENCING AN OPIOID-RELATED DRUG OVERDOSE**. A layperson can already legally administer naloxone to an individual experiencing an opioid overdose. This acts provides an extra level of legal protection so that a Good Samaritan can be confident he or she will not suffer consequences for acting to try to save a life.

As part of my work with AIDS CT I am in the process of reviewing records of drug-overdose deaths in Connecticut to determine which areas of the state are hardest hit. In the course of my work my eyes were opened to the true nature of opioid-related deaths. While many can be attributed to heroin, many other deaths are caused by overdose of legal medications including oxycodone, fentanyl, and hydrocodone. People from all age groups, from teenagers to seniors fall victim to opioid overdose deaths. Most of these deaths are unintentional and a number could have been prevented if friends and loved ones had access to naloxone and felt safe in using it without recrimination.

As harm reduction strategies go, naloxone is one of the less controversial, and more medically sound interventions out there. On the market for decades, naloxone has a long history of being safe and effective, and is not under patent, meaning it is available as a low-cost generic medication. There is no street use for naloxone, and it can even be administered several times without danger to the patient.

Increasing access to and use of naloxone will help prevent opioid overdoses from becoming opioid deaths. It is essential that education on how to obtain and use naloxone can include an assurance that it is safe, legally speaking, for someone to aid a person in need.

Please support Raised Bill 5487 as one important step in a process of reducing unnecessary deaths in our state. Thank you.

Daniel Philip Davidson