



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Judiciary Committee

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House Bill 5487: An Act Providing Immunity To A Person Who Administers An Opioid Antagonist To Another Person Experiencing An Opioid-Related Drug Overdose

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports House Bill 5487. This bill protects individuals such as family members and friends from liability for administering an opioid antagonist such as Naloxone/Narcan to someone experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose. Opioids include prescription drugs such as Oxycontin and Percocet, as well as illegal drugs such as heroin. This legislation aligns with laws already passed in many other states including Vermont and Rhode Island.

Naloxone/Narcan is a safe and effective prescription medicine that reverses an opioid overdose. Since someone experiencing an overdose is unable to administer this drug, current Connecticut law allows health care providers to prescribe Naloxone/Narcan to family members, friends, and others that may be in close proximity to someone who uses opiates and may experience an overdose. The rate of drug overdose deaths has been rising steadily in the United States, increasing by 102% from 1999-2002. This increase is largely because of prescription opioid painkillers. Drug overdose was the leading cause of death due to injury in 2010 in the United States. Among people 20-64 years old, drug overdose caused more deaths than motor vehicle traffic crashes. Passage of this bill will protect individuals who intervene to prevent a death due to opioid overdose.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's perspective on this bill.

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