

The Honorable State Representative Susan M Johnson

Legislative Office Building
Room 3500
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

March 16, 2014

Re: **HB 5528 - AN ACT CONCERNING ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**

Dear Representative Johnson:

My name is Andrea L. Boissevain, Director of Health, representing the town of Stratford, CT, and a member of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health (CADH). I am writing to you as the co-chair of the Public Health Committee to urge your support of House Bill 5528, An Act Concerning Essential Public Health Services. Here are the most critical reasons:

- **Connecticut's existing 8 public health mandates in the state statutes are outdated and no longer apply to local health departments and districts.** Local health departments are no longer responsible for emergency medical services, genetic disease oversight, or other specific services listed under the eight mandates. Outdated statutes could make it harder to access federal funds in the future.
- **Nationally, local health departments embrace the 10 essential public health services as the standard for services.** The ten essential public health services are included in the curriculum of accredited public health programs taught by academic institutions in Connecticut and across the country. Additionally, the national standard for voluntary accreditation for public health agencies uses the 10 essential services as their foundation. We have embraced the underpinnings of the 10 essential services of quality improvement and performance management.
- **Every Connecticut resident should be assured provision of the 10 essential public health services.** No matter where a citizen resides or where tourists or visitors in CT are located, public health services should be equitably available. The ten essential services provide accountability by linking public health performance to health outcomes. Such services don't necessarily have to be all provided by the individual health department or district. In Stratford, we have formed strong regional partnerships and collaboratives to achieve improved health outcomes.
- **Stratford's Path to Quality Public Health Services and Community Health Improvement.** We are in the midst of an 18-month pursuit of becoming nationally accredited. Working collaboratively with our two local area

hospitals, two community health centers and five other local health departments in the Greater Bridgeport area, we have assessed our communities' health, worked with the community to prioritize areas to focus on for the next five years, and create and enact a community health improvement plan. We developed a 5-year strategic plan has us on the path to advance service quality and performance...largely guided by the foundations set by 10 essential services.

I welcome the opportunity to meet or talk by phone with you to discuss further how best to ensure that, moving forward, we can advance public health service quality and performance. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrea L. Boissevain', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Andrea L. Boissevain, MPH

Director of Health

cc: Mayor John Harkins