

Fitzhugh Pannill, MD
SB 36

I am a practicing internist in Southbury and am writing to urge against the passage of SB 36 that would allow Nurse Practitioners to practice independent of physicians.

I have worked with many NPs and PAs in the 35 years since I graduated from Johns Hopkins. This work has been supervising and co-joint practice in Academic Health Centers, Yale New Haven hospital and the VA and outpatient clinics and office practice and nursing homes so it includes almost every venue in existence.

These NPs are all excellent Practitioners, but none of them have the 5 plus years of inpatient training with the sickest patients that a physician does. Consequently while their training qualifies them to handle routine outpatient issues none of them are trained to recognize the unusual, the atypical or a serious perhaps life threatening complication, because they have not been trained to do so.

After 35 years of working with adults in my office, I am constantly amazed at how frequently what appears to be a "simple" sore throat will turn out to be an abscess, or a patient's cry for help for something much more serious. I saw a patient with "heartburn" who was having an acute MI just last week.

Most of the NP programs are excellent, but SB36 does not distinguish between top tier programs like Yale and other less rigorous and insufficient training venues. Once given a license, all graduates will be free to run their practice in any way they see fit, with no oversight or review. Allowing practitioners with only two years of training free reign with the public's health is a bad idea.

People who argue that NPs will fill offices in the inner city or see Title 19 patients that cannot find a physician are basically arguing that our inner city or poor citizens should be satisfied with a lower standard of care. The solution to access here is to pay physicians market rates that will allow us to see all patients and not lose money on every visit, which is the case with Title 19 reimbursement now.

Thank you

Fitzhugh Pannill MD FACP
Southbury Medical Associates
22 Old Waterbury Road
Southbury Ct 06488