

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING 2/28/2014

GOVERNOR'S RAISED BILL No. 36 AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S  
RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Testimony of Laima Karosas PhD, APRN

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, members of the Committee

Thank you for raising this bill and issues surrounding the written collaborative agreement for APRNs.

As an APRN in CT for over 20 years, a nurse educator and Director of Nurse Practitioner Programs at Quinnipiac University, I have the unique perspective of understanding both APRN practice and education.

The current requirement for APRNs to have a collaborative agreement with a physician is restrictive and unnecessary. Health care has become more complex and it is a standard of practice to collaborate and consult with other health care providers. No other health care provider has a mandated collaborative agreement in order to practice in the state. As a consequence, the loss of a collaborating physician results in the loss of an APRN practice. The final result is that a large number of patients loses access to care.

This state cannot afford to have primary care providers who are unable to practice. More people will need providers as a result of the Affordable Care Act. APRNs provide safe, effective and efficient care to their patients. This has been widely documented in the literature and provided in the scope request to the Department of Public Health. APRNs will continue to provide effective care by working with others to ensure that patient care needs are met.

Respectfully I request that the Public Health Committee approach Governor's bill #36 favorably, keeping in mind how this bill will benefit residents of our state. Removal of the written collaborative agreement will not change how APRNs practice, but it will allow them to open, maintain and create innovative ways to care for the patients of Connecticut.

Thank you for considering this request and for the opportunity to raise my concerns.

Laima Karosas, PhD, APRN  
Chair, Health Policy Committee  
CT APRN Society

Nurse Practitioner with West Haven Medical Group, LLC, West Haven, CT.  
Director of Nurse Practitioner Programs at Quinnipiac University, Hamden, CT.