



March 14, 2014

To the Connecticut Public Health Committee:

As a certified genetic counselor and leader in genetic counseling for Hartford HealthCare, I support Raised Bill SB No. 437: An act concerning licensure for genetic counselors.

I commend those whose efforts went into raising licensure for genetic counselors into a bill. Presently there are fourteen other states with genetic counselor licensure, including our neighbors in Massachusetts. New York and Rhode Island are also in the process of pursuing licensure for genetic counselors. I hope that Connecticut will become number fifteen.

During my time in Connecticut I have worked with and potentially touched the lives of hundreds of patients and their families. Genetic counseling can often make a profound impact for these families. Genetic counseling is not about ordering "a simple test," as a counselor, I help patients to make informed medical decisions, and help them to deal with difficult situations. The decision of whether or not to have testing can be a challenging one for patients to make and I am there for them to help them to make the best decision for themselves.

Genetic counselors are an essential part of the healthcare system. We are a required member for cancer committee meetings as part of accreditation for cancer centers. With the recent announcements by Angelina Jolie, and Supreme Court patent ruling, genetic testing is now more accessible and complicated than ever. We work in collaboration with nurse practitioners and physician assistants who provide genetic testing for their patients. Licensure is to enhance these relationships, to clearly identify those in the profession with proficient skills of a genetic counselor, resulting in only the best possible healthcare for Connecticut residents.

I express sincere gratitude for the opportunity to support this bill. The language of SB No. 437 speaks to the matters of the genetic counselors in Connecticut as well as the Department of Public Health.

Kind Regards,

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