

"Oral health for all"



March 14, 2014

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

RAISED H.B. NO. 5537: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Susan Johnson and the members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address H.B. No. 5537. I am Mary Moran Boudreau, testifying on behalf of the Connecticut Oral Health Initiative, the only oral health advocacy organization in Connecticut operating under the vision of "Oral Health for All."

We I want you to support the passage of the bill that is found in Sec. 29. Subsection (a) of section 19a-562a of the general statutes which reads "(a) Each nursing home facility that is not a residential care home or an Alzheimer's special care unit or program shall annually provide (1) a minimum of two hours of training in pain recognition and administration of pain management techniques, and (2) a minimum of one hour of oral health and oral hygiene techniques to all licensed and registered direct care staff and nurse's aides who provide direct patient care to residents."

We support this initiative from the Department of Public Health (DPH), as it is an objective of the Consortium on Oral Health for Older Adults which is an outgrowth of the DPH's Task Force on Oral Health for Older Adults.

In 2013, the DPH conducted the Connecticut Oral Health Survey of Vulnerable Adults. The key findings included:

- 42% of Long-term Care facility residents are not getting the dental care they need.
- 37% of the Long-term Care facility residents with teeth had untreated tooth decay.
- The prevalence of untreated decay is more the 2.5 times higher among Connecticut's Long-term Care facility residents compared to the national average for adults 75 years and older.<sup>1</sup>

One action that you can take to start addressing this need is to support the passage of H. B. 5537 which mandates attention to Long-term Care facility residents oral health by the licensed and registered direct care staff and nurse's aides who provide direct patient care to residents

We urge you to pass this legislation. If you should have any further questions, please contact me at your earliest convenience at 860-246-2644 or [maryb@ctoralhealth.org](mailto:maryb@ctoralhealth.org).

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Moran Boudreau".

Mary Moran Boudreau  
Executive Director

<sup>1</sup> Connecticut Department of Public Health, Office of Oral Health. The Oral Health of Vulnerable Older Adults in Connecticut, Hartford, Connecticut, June 2013.