

March 5th, 2015

General Law Committee

Room 3500, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Written Testimony in Support of HB 6918,

An Act Concerning Changes to Prescription Drugs Dispensed to Certain Patients

Submitted electronically to: gltestimony@cga.ct.gov

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the physicians of the Connecticut Oncology Association, I thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today in support of House Bill 6918, An Act Concerning Changes to Prescription Drugs Dispensed to Certain Patients.

Cancer patients fall under the criteria described in this bill: as a complex or chronic or medical condition meaning a physical, behavioral or developmental condition that has been diagnosed or is being treated by a prescribing practitioner and: (a) has no known cure, (b) is progressive, or (c) can be debilitating or fatal if left untreated or undertreated.

House Bill 6918 states that "if a pharmacist has been informed that a patient is medically stable and diagnosed with a complex or chronic medical condition, the pharmacist may not change the drug prescribed to the patient without a medical basis for such change and the express written consent of the prescribing practitioner who prescribed the drug that is subject to the change.

Cancer treatment is complex and delicate. Often multiple combinations of drugs are used to treat an individual cancer, or specific individual drugs are chosen for their unique mechanism of action or approach to treating the cancer. Substitution, even of generics, biosimilar agents, or other drugs in the same medical class can result in variation of the treatment that could significantly change the treatment intent and efficacy. Only the treating physician is fully informed as to the unique patient's needs and health status. No one, including a pharmacist, should ever have the right to change a drug which has been prescribed to a patient without the express written consent of the prescribing practitioner for a cancer patient.

The oncology physicians who treat the cancer patient of Connecticut appreciate the wisdom and vision of the Committee in moving House Bill 6918 forward for approval and legislative action.

Thank you for your consideration. We at the Connecticut Oncology Association support this legislative and are very pleased that it is being considered in the 2015 Legislative Session.

Sincerely,



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