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Testimony of Robert Brex, Executive Director, Northeast Communities Against Substance Abuse, on behalf of the Connecticut Prevention Network

In favor of

SB 21- AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE OF ABUSE-DETERRENT OPIOID ANALGESICS.

Senator Crisco, Representative Megna and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, my name is Bob Brex. I am the Executive Director of Northeast Communities Against Substance Abuse and on behalf of the Connecticut Prevention Network want to offer my strong support of SB00021 , an Act Concerning Health Insurance Coverage of Abuse-Deterrent Opioid Analgesics.

This bill represents a technological advance to place an additional deterrent to the abuse of powerful medications and has been recognized and approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration. As a preventionist for the past thirty years, I will tell you that no one bill or action will greatly effect change but that we must approach the issue of substance abuse from multiple angles and approaches.

This bill and the availability of abuse- deterrent medications which are covered by health insurance plans will add one more barrier to the ability to abuse the opioid based drugs. This combined with greater education of the public and greater oversight and awareness in the prescribing process will increase prevention efforts in the state.

Abuse-Deterrent formulations can impact the issue in several ways:

It could potentially reduce direct abuse by those that are addicted because the "high" would not be as achievable.

It could reduce crime by those who are willing to steal he drugs whether that is adults or youth.

It could reduce health care costs as less people overdose on the medications.

If passed, SB 21 would provide one more tool in the overall prevention toolbox and we support its concept and potential.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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