

**Dr. Claudia R. Coplein
28 Stratford Road
West Hartford, CT 06117**

February 20, 2015

Public Health Committee
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Opposition to Proposed House Bill 5625

Via Email

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to express my opposition to Proposed House Bill 5625. By broadly defining “surgery,” HB 5625 could have the effect of barring numerous physicians and other medical professionals from performing routine tasks that are currently within their accepted scope of practice. As a result, without clarification, HB 5625 would create confusion over the scope of practice for many physicians and medical professionals, potentially limiting the availability in Connecticut of numerous medical and cosmetic procedures by restricting them only to surgeons.

The Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons (CTCACS) submitted similar Scope of Practice Requests to the Connecticut Department of Public Health in 2012 and 2013. Those requests sought to have the Department of Public Health bless the same definition of “surgery” that is currently found in HB 5625. Under the provisions of Public Act 11-209, a Scope of Practice Review Committee is intended to review and evaluate these requests and provide findings to the General Assembly’s Public Health Committee. Neither request resulted in a recommendation being made.

Notably, the 2012 and 2013 Scope of Practice requests made by CTCACS imply that these types of procedures would additionally be off limits to physicians other than those who have completed a surgical residency. Specifically, the 2013 request provides, “We do not envision [this change] impacting other physicians who practice in Connecticut as they are not licensed to perform surgery except within certain parameters as defined under their scope (i.e. podiatrists who are licensed to perform surgical procedures limited to the ankle and feet).” Thus, according to CTCACS’ interpretation, many physicians may likewise be barred from performing numerous routine procedures that fall under the proposed overly broad definition of surgery found in HB 5625.

There is no reason to upset the current status quo where surgeons, other physicians, physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses are able to discern with more granularity which procedures are and are not within their scope of practice. The blanket definition proposed in HB 5625 would certainly create confusion over what procedures are or not within many medical professionals' scope of practice, and may ultimately and unnecessarily lead to a reduction in the availability and affordability of many medical and cosmetic procedures. I urge you to report unfavorably on Proposed House Bill 5625.

Sincerely,



Claudia R. Coplem, DO, JD, MPH