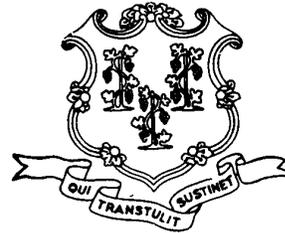


Department of Consumer Protection



Testimony of Jonathan A. Harris Commissioner-designee of Consumer Protection

Public Health Committee Public Hearing, March 4, 2015

HB 6279, "An Act Concerning Prescription Drug Monitoring, Continuing Education and the Return of Unused Prescription Drugs"
and
HB 6265, "An Act Concerning Prescription Drug Monitoring"

Sen. Gerratana, Rep. Ritter, Sen. Markley, Rep. Srinivasan and honorable members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on two bills before you today: HB 6279, "An Act Concerning Prescription Drug Monitoring, Continuing Education and the Return of Unused Prescription Drugs" and HB 6265, "An Act Concerning Prescription Drug Monitoring."

Both of these bills seek to address an issue of critical importance in our society today---the harm caused by prescription drug abuse. An important tool in fighting this scourge currently exists in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program---a vitally important program that is administered by the Department of Consumer Protection. This

tool has been utilized by pharmacists and prescribing physicians and other practitioners to reduce the incidences of drug abuse and diversion. In recent years, the program has become more widely known and we hope that the importance of this tool will have an even greater impact in public health and the safety of our loved ones at risk of controlled substance dependence.

Although we support the intent of both of these legislative proposals, the Department would respectfully request the committee to support the Governor's comprehensive legislative proposal to combat substance abuse and opioid overdoses and strengthens requirements for use of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. House Bill 6856, "An Act Concerning Substance Abuse and Opioid Overdose Prevention" contains these provisions and more, and I believe provides the comprehensive framework to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors and loved ones.

Thank you for your consideration. The Department stands ready to work with you and all interested parties as we tackle this most important issue.

Please feel free to contact me or DCP's Legislative Program Manager, Gary Berner if you have any questions or comments.