

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
FEBRUARY 23, 2015**

My name is Jennifer Herz and I am Assistant Counsel for the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA has been representing Connecticut's employers for 200 years and our goal is to foster a dynamic business climate. Our members include businesses from across the state of all sizes and industry types and we are proud to say the vast majority of our members are small companies employing less than 50 people.

**CBIA has concerns with the 3 telemedicine bills on today's agenda including SB 246 AA Defining and Establishing Standards for the Practice of Telemedicine, SB 467 AAC the Facilitation of Telemedicine and HB 6487 AAC Standards for Telemedicine Services.**

While CBIA certainly appreciates the value of telemedicine we are concerned that restricting this practice so early in its development may hamper its progress. The current bills are in proposed bill form so it is somewhat challenging to provide specific comments but our general concern is the impact on cost and quality of healthcare in Connecticut.

Connecticut's employers are very concerned with the cost and quality of healthcare. In a recent survey, CBIA's members listed healthcare costs as among the top 3 issues keeping them up at night – right behind national and state economy.<sup>1</sup> Connecticut's employers contribute to their employees' premiums and rising premiums make it more and more difficult for employers to help pay for their employees healthcare. Equally important, employers value the bottom line contribution of healthy employees because that means a productive, innovative workforce. In this regard, CBIA is concerned that setting prices and other barriers when telemedicine services are still developing may hinder progress in this field.

We also wish to highlight a similar bill approved by the Insurance and Real Estate Committee - SB 5 - that also may impact progress in this developing sector.

Telemedicine certainly has a promising future to help address cost and quality issues in healthcare but over-regulation prior to understanding this new and exciting field may be detrimental to its success.

CBIA urges you to not act on SB 246, SB 467 and HB 6487 at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit CBIA's comments.

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<sup>1</sup> See 2014 Survey of Connecticut Businesses, page 5: [http://www5.cbiam.com/newsroom/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/BlumShapiro\\_14.pdf](http://www5.cbiam.com/newsroom/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/BlumShapiro_14.pdf)