



CCM 2015 Testimony

900 CHAPEL STREET, 9th FLOOR, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-2807 PHONE (203) 498-3000 FAX (203) 562-6314

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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

March 4, 2015

My name is Rudy Marconi, First Selectman for the Town of Ridgefield and CCM Board Member.

I am testifying on behalf of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities. Our members represent 156 towns and cities, representing over 95 percent of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

HB 5058 "An Act Concerning Substance Abuse Treatment"

HB 6265 "An Act Concerning Prescription Drug Monitoring"

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

CCM *supports* these bills as they would provide initiatives to address drug abuse prevention in Connecticut.

During the summer and fall of 2014, CCM convened a working group comprised of municipal CEOs, health professionals, community health providers, educators and law enforcement officials to examine the drug abuse epidemic affecting our communities. I was fortunate enough to chair this working group where we met with various state agencies including Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Department of Consumer Protection, Department of Public Health, and Department of Children and Families to discuss how the state and local efforts could enhance drug abuse prevention in the State.

The CCM work group developed a series of recommendations, from administrative to legislative. The proposals are comprehensive, involving the various issues relating to drug abuse, such as education for prescribers, better utilization of the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP), enhanced and modified prevention initiatives in schools, and improvements to assist law enforcement to combat illegal drug activity.

These bills align with CCM's proposals. The proposals would enhance a health care provider's knowledge of the growing trend that is occurring, and equips them with tools to help address and prevent over prescribing of particular narcotics. Among the tools that prescribers can use is the registration and use of PMP. This is a tool available to prescribers today. However, this underutilization is due to the lack of knowledge about the PMP and the benefits it has for both patients and prescribers. As of October of 2013, approximately 20% of all prescribers (that are required to register with the PMP) in Connecticut had registered with the PMP. CCM supports the proposal to require continuing education for re-licensure to prescribe controlled substances.

The PMP can be a vital tool to help combat the growing trend of controlled substance abuse, however it is apparently underutilized. Therefore, CCM supports the proposal that would require prescribers to consult the registry prior to prescribing to an individual. Other states that have implemented this requirement, such as New York, saw a dramatic decrease in their prescription abuse rate. The issue has been discussed in a variety of forums, including a Department of Public Health Summit regarding prescription drug abuse, which CCM was also fortunate to participate. The proposals before you today were items that were discussed.

CCM also supports the proposal that would allow unused medications to be returned at pharmacies. A similar program, administered through the through Department of Consumer Protection, has pharmaceutical drop boxes be available 24 hours a day at local police stations. This program has seen great success, as hundreds of pounds of pharmaceuticals have been deposited at these locations. However, towns that utilizes resident state troopers, which do not have a police station open 24 hours a day, are unable to have these drop boxes placed at these locations. For these towns, an alternative can be the local pharmacy.

As you know, there are a variety of bills this year focused on the issue of substance abuse prevention, including HB 6856 which is the Governor's bill to address substance abuse and opioid overdose prevention. CCM will continue to advocate for these important proposals which will ultimately provide an enhanced public welfare for Connecticut.

CCM and the Town of Ridgefield urge the Committee to ***favorably report HB 5058, HB 6265, and HB 6279.***

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, Senior Legislative Associate of CCM at mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org or (203) 500-7556.