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Good morning, Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee. I am Mark Masselli, President and CEO of Community Health Center, Inc. and I am testifying today in support of Proposed H.B. No. 5528 An Act Concerning Continuing Education for Health Care Providers who Prescribe Narcotic Drugs.

Prescription drug abuse is a growing problem in Connecticut and around the country. Health care providers need continued education to address this problem and its underlying causes. CHC has established itself as a national leader in training providers around this issue.

CHC provides evidence-based, videoconferencing healthcare consulting and training using a lifelong learning and guided practice model named Project ECHO. Hundreds of providers from states around the country consult with specialists in pain management, buprenorphine treatment, and other complex care issues. Participation in these Project ECHO sessions are financially supported by Medicaid agencies, foundations as well as primary practices.

Primary care providers present cases that are discussed with specialists via a videoconference that also includes didactic sessions. In many cases, treatment of pain as well as of opioid addiction can best be provided in the primary care setting.

CHC urges the passage of Proposed H.B. No. 5528 An Act Concerning Continuing Education for Health Care Providers who Prescribe Narcotic Drugs. We also encourage the General Assembly to consider innovative methods to improve education available to health care providers, such as Project ECHO. CHC looks forward to working with legislators and members of state agencies to improve the care provided to all Connecticut's residents.



*Serving underserved and uninsured patients at Connecticut's largest network of community health centers.*