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Connecticut State Medical Society
Testimony on
House Bill 5528 An Act Concerning Continuing Education For Health Care Providers Who
Prescribe Narcotic Drugs
Presented to the Public Health Committee
February 23, 2015

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee on behalf of the physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony to you today on **House Bill 5528 An Act Concerning Continuing Education for Health Care Providers Who Prescribe Narcotic Drugs.**

For many years now, CSMS has actively and aggressively sought to educate physicians about narcotic drugs, opioids and other controlled substances. Additionally, CSMS has provided many high quality ACCME accredited Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs not only with our own resources but through grants obtained at the local and national level, through both private and government entities. We are proud of our efforts, but recognize a lot more needs to be done as more powerful medications are developed and addiction and abuse rises without adequate access to or coverage for substance abuse treatment.

Since the establishment in statute of Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements, CSMS has opposed the addition of new mandated individual requirements. This opposition in no way questions the importance of the issue at hand, but more about the ability of physicians and other health care professionals to obtain CME in areas appropriate to their specialty area of patient care. For that reason, we respectfully ask that HB 5528 in its current form be rejected and CSMS be given the opportunity to continue its efforts to work with policy makers to develop CME statutes that address such critical issues as controlled substances but also ensures that the appropriate healthcare professionals are getting appropriate CME relevant to their practice and specialty. Another mandate is not what is needed, but further education on the prescribing of opioids and other similar medications, and especially the treatment of substance abuse, is something that CSMS stands ready to work on with this committee and the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the committee as it move forward on this important issue and looks at how to address the growing problem of substance abuse in Connecticut.