



CCM 2015 Testimony

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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

February 23, 2015

My name is Rudy Marconi, First Selectwoman 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 5528 "An Act Concerning Continuing Education For Health Care Providers Who Prescribe Narcotic Drugs"

CCM *supports* this bill as would require health care providers licensed to prescribe narcotic drugs to complete continuing education during their license registration period on the topic of controlled substances.

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. Based on the discussions from the experts, the working group recommended that enhancements should be made in educating prescribers on the epidemic levels of prescription drug abuse.

This bill would enhance a health care provider's knowledge of the growing trend that is occurring, learn tools to help address and prevent over prescribing of particular narcotics. Among the tools that prescribers can use in the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP). This is a tool available to prescribers, however is underutilized. In particular, likely due to the lack of knowledge about the PMP and the benefits it has for both patients and prescribers. CCM would recommend that any continuing education program required for re-licensure include the growing trend of abuse of controlled substances, and the benefits the PMP can offer to help combat the problem.

CCM has been fortunate enough to participate in a Department of Public Health Summit regarding prescription drug abuse. The proposal before you today was something that was been discussed.

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 PMP, enhanced and modified prevention initiatives in schools, and improvements to assist law enforcement combat illegal drug activity.

CCM and the Town of Ridgefield urge the Committee to ***favorably report HB 5528.***



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