



Connecticut Association of Addiction Professionals

**Testimony on HB 5528: An Act Concerning Continuing Education for Health Care
Providers Who Prescribe Narcotic Drugs**

Public Hearing –February 23, 2015

Submitted by:

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To Members of the Public Health Committee:

On behalf of the CT Association of Addiction Professionals (CAAP), I am submitting testimony on HB 5528. Having learned today of Monday's Public Hearing, CAAP representatives and I are unable to attend the Hearing due to professional commitments.

CAAP has serious concerns with the very minimal requirements of **one hour of education on use of controlled substances during each licensure period**. The current opiate epidemic's surge has been well documented, identifying as a root cause, the prescription of opioid medication by well-intentioned, but poorly informed health care providers and regrettably, those providers who have a financial motivation in treating highly vulnerable patients.

CAAP recommends that this Bill be tabled until more testimony with a similar focus re: the challenge of the heroin epidemic comes before the Public Health Committee. It is imperative that any educational requirement on this topic include specific language that instructs healthcare providers, who identify patients with a risk of opiate abuse, to refer these patients to an addiction specialist for assessment and treatment intervention.

At the beginning of the General Assembly, CAAP submitted its **2015 Advocacy Initiative-Heroin Epidemic** document to the Leadership of the Public Health Committee that includes evidence-based testimony on this very issue. CAAP's representatives look forward to sharing the Association's formal recommendations for addressing this deadly epidemic at future public hearings on Bills, which deal with legislation on opiate abuse and dependency.

For your additional consideration, I have attached two recent articles that strongly endorse more intensive and comprehensive standards of practice for healthcare providers, who prescribe narcotics.

Good Luck with your deliberations.