

**Testimony by Michael J. Soltis, M.D. In Support of
Senate Bill 258: An Act Concerning Infant Safe Sleep Practice**

Committee on Public Health
February 20, 2015
Submitted by Alexandra Dufresne, J.D.

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, Distinguished Members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Michael Soltis and I have been working as a Pediatric Emergency Medicine Physician at Connecticut Children's Medical Center in Hartford Connecticut for over seven years. In my role as a Pediatric Emergency Medicine Physician I have been involved on multiple occasions in providing care for infants presenting in extremis or after being found deceased by their families due to situations related to unsafe sleep practices. As a member of the State of Connecticut Child Fatality Review Panel, I am regularly involved in the review of preventable infant deaths across Connecticut related to unsafe sleep conditions. **I am providing written testimony in support of Senate Bill 258 because I feel that this bill is a critical step in preventing deaths of infants in Connecticut.**

Through my experience with the Child Fatality Review Panel it has become clear that it is an **extremely rare event when an infant dies during sleep with no underlying medical condition or external risk factors like co-sleeping or other unsafe sleep conditions.** What this means is that these deaths are preventable. Hospitals are routinely involved in the provision of anticipatory guidance to parents about multiple issues including safe sleep practices for infants. There is more work to be done to ensure that a consistent message is given by hospitals regarding safe sleep practice and that this message is reaching families in a meaningful way.

- Infant deaths related to unsafe sleep conditions are preventable.
- Education of parents about the modifiable risk factors associated with sudden unexplained infant death is critical in the prevention of these tragedies.
- Legislation promoting the provision of informational materials regarding safe sleep practices for infants will help to support hospitals in their efforts to educate parents about this issue.

For the reasons above, I strongly support Senate Bill 258. Thank you for taking the time to consider my written testimony.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. Soltis, M.D.
2/20/15