

February 19, 2015

Dear Senator Gerratana:
Dear Representative Ritter:
Dear Senator Markley:
Dear Representative Srinivasan:

My name is Dr. Winston A. Campbell. I work at the University of Connecticut Health Center School of Medicine-John Dempsey Hospital. On Friday February 20th the Public Health Committee will hear testimony on SB857- An Act Concerning Licensure for Genetic Counselors. I am writing to ask you to support this important legislation.

Over one third of genetic counselors in the U.S. are licensed and many other states are working towards this effort.

In my position as Director of Maternal-Fetal Medicine at the UConn Health Center, I work with genetic counselors on a daily basis in the evaluation and management of patients who are referred to my practice. My partners and I have a interactive practice relationship with genetic counselors.

Obstetricians who practice in communities or hospitals around the state refer their patient for a suspected genetic condition that might be affecting their unborn child to our practice. Our evaluation might confirm a finding that requires the services of a genetic counselor. As well, a patient might be referred to a genetic counselor based on a potential risk due to the patients past obstetrical history or family history. As a result of the counselor's evaluation, they may refer the patient to our practice during the pregnancy for an evaluation of the unborn child. Thus the expertise of the genetic counselor is very important to our practice and has invaluable benefit in helping a patient or couple to understand any risk that may or may not be present.

Genetic counselors are professionals whose training includes a Master's degree and mandatory continuing education. Genetic counselors provide an important and needed service. They have expertise in genetics and genetic counseling and function as an essential member of the health care team.

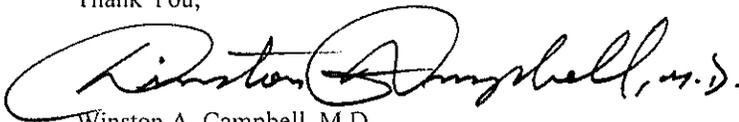
Genetic counselors have the ability to explain, accurately and in easy-to-understand terms, difficult and constantly evolving genetic information to patients; evaluate a complex family history; and, evaluate the need for genetic testing. They provide genetic information in a context of supportive care and sensitivity that is tailored to each patient's/family's particular needs.

They keep up-to-date, through their training and continuing education, with advances in genetic technology, refinements in genetic testing and the implications of testing for the individual and their family members.

With the rapid advances in genetic technology, genetic testing and counseling services are quickly moving to the forefront of biosciences. With this in mind, licensure is needed in order to ensure that the quality of these professionals remains high and that the public is afforded the best level of care.

I urge you to support this important legislation. If you have any questions or would like to discuss please feel free to reach out to me.

Thank You,



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