

**Testimony Presented to the
General Law Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly**

Tuesday, March 8, 2016

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**S.B. No. 313
An Act Concerning Biological Products**

Good afternoon Senator Leone, Representative Baram, Senator Larson, Representative Kiner , Senator Witkos, Representative Carter, members of the General Law Committee.

I'm Paul Pescatello, Senior Counsel and Executive Director of the Connecticut Bioscience Growth Council.

I am also President/CEO of the New England Biotechnology Association and Chair of We Work for Health Connecticut.

The Connecticut Bioscience Growth Council is a committee of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association's biotech and biopharma members.

The Bioscience Growth Council was formed as a means to foster collaboration both among Connecticut biotech and biopharma companies themselves and, just as importantly, *with* our state. As you know, Connecticut – *this* General Assembly – has chosen wisely to invest in the life sciences as a foundation for Connecticut's 21st century economy and as a means to create a broad spectrum of jobs.

Last week's ribbon cutting for Alexion Pharmaceutical's world headquarters in New Haven – with labs and offices for over 1,000 employees – the strides we have made in regenerative medicine and stem cell research, and the research and economic development already being accomplished by Jackson Labs, name only a few of the dividends generated by this Connecticut investment.

I am here today to support Senate Bill 313, An Act Concerning Biological Products.

Those of us who share the goal of advancing the life sciences in Connecticut are often asked – and we often ask ourselves – two questions. First, what can we do to accelerate the development of new medicines – better treatments and sometimes cures – for patients? Second, how can we foster the growth of the Connecticut biopharma industry – how can we help the biopharma companies already in our state, bring companies from out-of-state into Connecticut and encourage new companies to start-up operations in Connecticut?

Senate Bill 313 facilitates the growth of the Connecticut biopharma industry – it answers those two questions I just identified; it is part of an effective strategy to grow the life sciences and biopharma in Connecticut.

Senate Bill 313 is prudent public policy that reflects an extended and thoughtful process at the federal Food and Drug Administration to create a biosimilars approval pathway. It recognizes the important similarities and dissimilarities between chemically-derived medicines and biological products – which are products/ medicines made from living organisms – and brings Connecticut's pharmacy practice regulation up to date. It allows

pharmacy substitutions with biological products and ensures patient safety by linking substitution to biological products described as “interchangeable” by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Importantly, Senate Bill 313 also creates a conduit of communication among pharmacies, prescribers and patients.

Senate Bill 313 is first and foremost about the needs of patients for treatment options and respect for the patient–physician relationship. It represents the outcome of a dialogue aimed at fostering and protecting innovation while at the same time creating a safe and effective pathway to bring interchangeable versions of biological products to patients.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have or expand upon any points made in my testimony.

Thank you.