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**AFT Healthcare** ❤️

Testimony of  
**Jean Morningstar**  
First Vice President, AFT Connecticut, AFL-CIO

Public Health Committee Public Hearing  
March 2, 2016

***HB 5460 An Act Concerning the Administration of Glucagon in Schools***

***SB 293 An Act Concerning Recommendations of the School Nurse Advisory Council***

***HB 5451, An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations for Various Revisions to the Office of Health Care Access Statutes***

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Jean Morningstar and I am proud to be the First Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse union of more than 30,000 members, including more 7,000 healthcare workers in 10 acute care hospitals in Connecticut and hundreds of school nurses. It is on their behalf that I testify before you today on a number of bills.

***HB 5460 An Act Concerning the Administration of Glucagon in Schools***

School nursing is a specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievement of students. To that end, school nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety; intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services; and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning. School nurses are an important, but often overlooked and disregarded, part of our school communities. The disturbing trend to allow licensed functions of a school nurse to be performed by non-licensed personnel not only potentially puts students in danger, but also compromises non-licensed staff.

A school nurse is uniquely qualified by virtue of his/her education and licensed to administer glucagon and other medications. Rather than staff school nurses at safe and appropriate levels, this bill would allow school districts cut corners and mandate a non-licensed staff person to perform that task. We cannot in good conscience support this bill and strongly urge you to reject it.

We opposed the language that is now existing statute when it passed in 2013. That at least allowed non-licensed staff to volunteer to administer glucagon. This bill requires any school employee to do it on demand. Our school nurses are well aware that delegation is sometimes necessary to meet the healthcare needs of students and we empathize with school districts and parents who want to make sure there is someone trained and available to provide care in the absence of the nurse. The answer,

however, is not to add responsibilities to non-licensed personnel who do not have the skills to properly assess a situation or properly respond should an emergency arise. The answer is to have more school nurses.

We wouldn't expect a licensed school nurse to take the place of a certified classroom teacher. How can we expect the reverse? Please reject HB 5460.

**SB 293 An Act Concerning Recommendations of the School Nurse Advisory Council**

This is a bill that we support. This council was appointed to provide guidance as to what school nurses and school districts should be doing. To require school nurses to complete an orientation program is both prudent and sensible. Further, school districts should already be completing the health services information survey. If they are not for some reason, this bill will make sure that they start.

**HB 5451, An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations for Various Revisions to the Office of Health Care Access Statutes**

We support this bill as amended. The Office of Health Care Access (OHCA) needs to look very closely at the situation in Connecticut. Access must be a priority for the citizens of CT and mergers and acquisitions need to be transparent and understandable. To require scrutiny and compliance is important. This bill would make the agents of change be responsible for the costs of examining these transactions, not the state. Further, this gives OHCA the right to penalize those who do not comply. Healthcare in Connecticut needs to be affordable, accessible, and sane. Accountability to the citizens that help fund these entities is the cost of doing business. Our citizens deserve nothing less.