



Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants

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**TESTIMONY by the
Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
for the
Public Health Committee Public Hearing on
Re: S.B. No. 67 (RAISED) PUBLIC HEALTH. 'AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY AND
RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES'**

February 13, 2016

The Honorable Terry B Gerratana
The Honorable Matthew Ritter
Co-Chairs, Public Health Committee

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee:

The Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA), the professional society representing over 1900 physician assistants (PAs) in CT, submits this testimony recommending the inclusion of the title “physician assistant” in most instances where the title “advanced practiced registered nurse” is also added to raised S.B.67.

By excluding PAs by title, S.B.67 will negatively impact current CT PA practice and CT residents' access to health care by PAs. CT PAs practice medicine with nearly identical clinical roles and responsibilities as APRNs and often with APRNs as colleagues in the same clinic, hospital or other health care facility. Along with our physician colleagues, PAs and APRNS practice authority and responsibilities are exercised not only in primary care settings but also in many other settings including urgent care, emergency care, specialty care clinics from orthopedics to oncology, hospital based medicine units, intensive care units, and specialty intensive care units.

Very simply, if S.B.67 is approved as is currently proposed, the exclusion of Physician Assistants will create significant confusion regarding existing PA scope of practice, subsequently undermine current PA authority as care providers, and ultimately decrease access to care by CT residents who are served by PAs. In the past, CT PAs and patients have experienced this unfortunate fallout of exclusionary statutory language due to exact interpretations of statute by health care facilities or institutions that employ PAs.

To that end, ConnAPA respectfully seeks the most precise and accurate language that includes Physician Assistants within S.B.67 as indicated in attachments accompanying this testimony. The places requested for inclusion do not change current PA scope of practice as ConnAPA does not seek authorization to prescribe medicinal marijuana. ConnAPA's goal is merely to more fully synchronize CT statute with current PA practice in order to avoid creating more confusion that may unnecessarily prohibit PAs from providing the highest quality health care to CT residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Weber, MA, PA-C
Dan Mussen, PA-C
Co-Chairs, Legislative Committee

Jason Prevelige, MHS, PA-C
President