



*A District Branch of the
American Psychiatric Association*

Statement opposing Senate Bill 67, An Act Concerning the Authority and Responsibilities of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses.

The Connecticut Psychiatric Society, an organization of 800 psychiatrists practicing in the state, wishes to express its concerns about SB67, AAC.

While we support the bill's intent to expand access to health care, we agree with the Connecticut State Medical Society's testimony that changing statutes referring to physicians by simply adding advance practice registered nurses across the board needs more scrutiny.

We would like to point out that while APRNs have independent practice, it is the independent practice of nursing, not medicine. There are some parts of this omnibus bill where APRNs are being added to statutes involving situations in which the added training and medical expertise of a physician is crucial.

We are specifically concerned about Section 1, which allows two APRNs to determine who is incapacitated for the purpose of executing power of attorney, and Section 22, which allows an APRN to determine who is incapacitated for the purpose of enacting a living will. We do not understand why these actions would be in the scope of practice of APRNs. In both of these cases, an individual's right to make decisions about his own body is at stake, and he deserves to be evaluated by the most well-trained practitioner—a physician—before these rights are taken away. We would note that, in other matters involving decision-making capacity, such as applications to the probate court for conservatorship of person or estate, or the involuntary administration of psychiatric medication, the judgment of physicians is considered mandatory. We believe that the situations addressed in Sections 1 and 22 of this act similarly require medical training and judgment, because we do not think these matters are addressed in the curriculum of nursing training.

We are also concerned with the concepts in Sections 17 and 27, in which APRNs would be added to a list of practitioners who could perform evaluations of physicians who are being investigated by the Department of Public Health. As a matter of fundamental fairness, physicians in this situation should be evaluated by their peers who are qualified to make judgments about the adequacy or appropriateness of a physician's practice.

Because of these concerns and the large scope of this bill, we support reconsideration and study of all the sections addressed in this bill.

Thank you for your attention.