



**Testimony of Carrie Rand-Anastasiades
Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee
In Opposition to
SB 5 AA Establishing a Surcharge on the Manufacturing and
Distribution of Opioids and Funding for Opioid Abuse and Treatment**

Good Afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Berger and members of the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee. My name is Carrie Rand-Anastasiades and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Community Pharmacies. We represent chain pharmacies around the State such as Walgreens, Rite-Aid, Stop & Shop, and PriceChopper to name a few. I am here today to testify in opposition to SB 5 AA Establishing a Surcharge on the Manufacturing and Distribution of Opioids and Funding for Abuse and Treatment.

It is a truth universally acknowledged that opioid abuse is a major crisis and much needs to be done to combat it. Seeking funding sources is laudable, but we disagree that placing a surcharge on manufacturers and distributors of opioids is the appropriate way to go about accomplishing this goal.

This proposal would only further drive up the costs of pharmaceuticals, which are very expensive as it is. To my knowledge, CT would be the only State in the union that would tax prescription drugs if this proposal were to pass. This will only force insurance companies or PBM's to require that more and more patients procure their drugs via mail order, in States that are not subject this tax. This will take additional business out of CT's brick and mortar pharmacies that are already competing with mail order or pharmacies in neighboring States.

There is also a question about how this tax would be passed on to the consumer. As the Federal Government is changing reimbursement to reflect the actual acquisition cost of the drug and the true cost of dispensing, now is not the time to be adding additional expense into the equation.

We urge you to reject this surcharge and focus on pharmacist prescribing of Narcan as well as the education of opioid addiction.