

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 16, 2016 PUBLIC HEARING

Christina Morrissey

IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL No. 67

AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVANCED
PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Committee,

Thank you for raising this bill, addressing patient care concerns.

I am Christina Morrissey, DNP, a family nurse practitioner and a primary care provider working with underserved communities in the Hartford area. I support Bill No. 67 because I believe it will improve patient care for my patients.

Throughout my career I have worked with low-income and underserved populations in office and homecare settings. I have seen that finding access to primary care is a great struggle for many patients. This is due to difficulty in getting to healthcare appointments as well as a limited number of healthcare providers. My aim is to alleviate some of that shortage as a primary care provider but statutes requiring a "physician" signature pose a problem for myself and for my patients. Connecticut has numerous statutes that require a "physician" signature only because physicians were the only health care providers when the statutes were written. What this means on a day-to-day basis is that I cannot sign forms for which I am qualified to do so. Forms are delayed because I must wait for a physician to sign them, or the patient must come back for a second appointment if that physician has not previously seen the patient. This is an unnecessary health care expense and a meaningless burden on my patients. These forms address many issues, ranging from occupational forms, to disability requirements, to Do Not Resuscitate orders.

Additionally, I am aware of several APRN groups that provide primary care for homebound patients in their homes. These patients will very rarely see a physician and doing so would be an added expense and undue burden. APRNs often discuss end of life planning with these patients but do not have the legal capacity to write a DNR order, despite having the qualifications.

Allowing APRNs to sign these forms will increase efficiency, decrease costs, and prevent patient harm due to unnecessary delays.

Thank you.