



Testimony of Mahesh Bhaya, M.D.
Commerce Committee
February 23, 2017

SB820 AN ACT CONCERNING ELIGIBILITY OF PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS
UNDER THE SMALL BUSINESS EXPRESS PROGRAM.

Good Afternoon Senator Hartley, Frantz, Rep Simmons, Yaccarino and other distinguished members of the Commerce Committee. My name is Mahesh Bhaya, M.D. and I am a board certified Otolaryngologist practicing in Waterbury CT. I am here to represent the physicians and physicians in training in the above mentioned medical specialties in support of SB 820.

Seldom as physicians do we get an opportunity to testify on our status and needs as small business owners. Most of our time and energy goes into patient care and safety in healthcare, so it is both welcoming and refreshing for me to come before you as a business owner in Connecticut supporting a bill that expands opportunities for us to grow our businesses. It is easy to forget that physicians employ thousands of employees and are responsible for health benefits and administrative costs just like other businesses here in Connecticut. In some regards, it is even more frustrating for us, since we are intimately aware of the costs associated with healthcare on both sides of the equation. We struggle daily with reimbursement problems and issues, and the unenviable task of collecting high deductibles placed on patients by insurers.

I am here today to talk, as a non-primary care specialist, about the need to include all physicians -- not just primary care providers -- on SB 820, and to remind members of this committee that the high cost of technology is adversely affecting our ability to conduct business. The requirement of medical practices to utilize electronic medical record technology, and other bureaucratic burdens such as the onerous reporting requirements of the Quality Payment Program have had a crippling effect on the medical community's ability to acquire other technologies designed to improve outcomes and enhance safety and health care delivery. It has been a difficult time for those working in healthcare that are faced with escalating administrative costs,

decreased reimbursements and added bureaucratic red tape that has not yielded better outcomes for our patients. In fact, it has had a chilling and negative effect on the recruitment of young physicians into our state, who are also recruited by practices in other states offering more attractive compensation and benefit packages.

In closing, if SB820 is amended to benefit ALL physicians, it will not only ease the burden for physicians who are struggling with these new financial demands, but also insure that new doctors coming into Connecticut who often carry significant educational debts will have an opportunity to compete in this difficult market.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your anticipated support of SB 820.