

Catherine D. Ludlum  
46 St. James Street, Unit 16  
Manchester, CT 06040-5982

860-649-7110  
[cathyludlum@cox.net](mailto:cathyludlum@cox.net)

**Public Health Committee**  
**Testimony on Proposed Bill 5564**  
**An Act Concerning Accessibility of Medical Diagnostic Equipment**  
**February 17, 2017**

Rep. Steinberg, Sen. Gerratana, Sen. Somers, and members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Cathy Ludlum, and I am writing in regard to Proposed Bill 5564, An Act Concerning Accessibility of Medical Diagnostic Equipment. I appreciate the intent of this bill, as it validates the problems people like myself with significant disabilities face when trying to access the medical system. I am hopeful that it represents the first step toward a solution.

I add my voice to the eloquent testimony of others who have described the problems those of us with mobility disabilities face around inaccessible diagnostic equipment. Lifting us onto examination tables poses a hazard, not only for us, but for the medical personnel who do the lifting. Some hospitals now provide a portable lift to aid with the transfer, but this is not always helpful, as x-ray tables and some other equipment do not have enough clearance so the lift cannot roll underneath. I recently experienced this when I had to go for an x-ray, and I had to be lifted onto and off of the table. All the people who helped me were great, but it's not a process that I would want to go through very often.

A few years ago, I went for a bone density test, and there was a ceiling lift available to transfer me from my wheelchair onto the x-ray table. It seems to me that this would be the way to go. I am not suggesting that every x-ray table have a ceiling lift, but that they be placed strategically so that at least one table would always have access.

Like others who have testified, I have had enormous trouble being weighed, having a pelvic exam, and having a mammogram. The mammogram machine is not flexible, and neither am I. We literally cannot get me into a position where the machine can clamp down. As a stopgap measure, I have been using an ultrasound, although I am told this is not as accurate as a mammogram. I did look at the federal Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board's standards, but I did not see my answer there. It talks about the height of the breast platform, and ability to get a wheelchair close to it. These are good things, but for some of us the only solution will be development of a machine that can tilt to fit an unusual body shape, but I don't know how feasible that is.

Some of my peers have been told that they do not need a pelvic exam, or have had to have the procedure done in their wheelchairs. I have experienced this as well. This is not good medical practice, and I am hoping that this discussion will bring about better options.

Some have expressed concern that linking Connecticut's accessibility standards for medical equipment to the Architectural and Transportation Compliance Board's standard may be too rigid an approach, as new solutions may arise in the future. I am not sure what I think about that, but I do appreciate your willingness to address this very real problem.

Thank you.