Good Morning: Representative Steinberg, Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Srinivasan and esteemed members of the Committee on Public Health, thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses’ Association (CNA). My name is Kimberly Sandor, MSN, RN, FNP; I am name the Executive Director of the Connecticut Nurses Association.

I speak in support of PROPOSED BILL NO. 6981 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC HEALTH PRIMARY PREVENTION STUDY GROUP WITH THE ADDITION OF LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARATIES AND FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN.

The American Nurses’ Association Social Policy Statement captures the essence of the nursing profession when they state:

Nursing is the protection, promotion and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injuries, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities and populations.

Registered Nurses (RNs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) understand health and the complex interplay between the individual, family and community. This front line experience captures a bridge between science and practice, and understands the individual as part of a community, and how the individual manages their health.
within the context of the places they live, work and play. In addition, they understand
the complexities of the health care system, community resources and insurance
coverage. Nurses bring this unique perspective to a Public Health Primary Prevention
Study Group.

Primary Care, as defined by the American Academy of Family Physicians, describes,
“Primary care practices provide health promotion, disease prevention, health
maintenance, counseling, patient education, diagnosis and treatment of acute and
chronic illnesses in a variety of health care settings.” UCONN’s Primary care practice,
“focuses on prevention, wellness, screening and ongoing management of medical
problems.” (www.health.uconn.edu/primary-care/)

To truly address primary prevention, we need to consider population health, health
disparities and prenatal and early childhood. It is well studied by Harvard at the Center
on the Developing Child that healthy adults are created from healthy pregnancies and
healthy early childhoods. The science is overwhelming, and demonstrates that
“experiences and environmental influences “get under the skin” and interact with
genetic predispositions.” (www.developingchild.harvard.edu/science/deep-
dives/lifelong-health/)

Much work and attention has been given to understanding and addressing health
disparities. We suggest the committee draw upon this work and identify science
informed best practices that truly address primary prevention and are individualized for
the needs of the CT communities to guide their work and reflect awareness that primary
care and health promotion is deeply rooted in families and communities.
We request the Committee consider adding additional language that reflects the complexities of reducing health care disparities and providing successful primary care into individuals, by recognizing the complexities of where individuals live, work and play.

We suggest additional language be added to “(1) Public school education curriculum that facilitates disease prevention “to include health literacy, and principles and strategies to reduce health disparities.”

Add an additional charge of the group, “to convene a stakeholders meeting to consider gaps in community care, potential groups to meet gaps, integration of identified strategies to reduce health care disparities.”

Therefore, I ask you to support proposed legislation PROPOSED BILL NO. 6981 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC HEALTH PRIMARY PREVENTION STUDY GROUP with additional language.

Thank you.

Kimberly A. Sandor

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