



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

March 16, 2018

**Commissioner Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
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Senate Bill 300 - An Act Concerning Collaborative Arrangements Between Physician Assistants and Physicians

The Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information regarding Senate Bill 300, which would change the scope of practice for a physician assistant (PA) so that the PA would no longer be restricted to practicing under the supervision of a physician, but would rather be able to engage in a collaborative agreement with one or more physicians. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

The Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA) submitted a scope of practice request to the Department, pursuant to CGS Sections [19a-16d](#) through [19a-16f](#), which included many of the revisions proposed in this bill. The ConnAPA request was not among the two scope of practice review committees that the Department was able to convene this year. DPH is unable to provide a formal opinion on the scope of practice changes proposed in Senate Bill 300 without the benefit of a formal scope of practice review process.

However, Section 5 of Senate Bill 300 removes the physician to physician assistant supervisory ratio prescribed in current statute. The Department does not perceive this as a change in scope of practice, and does not oppose this concept. The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) has identified six key elements that it says should be a part of every state Physician Assistant Practice Act. According to the AAPA, Connecticut currently meets five out of six of these elements. The removal of the prescribed physician to physician assistant ratio would align Connecticut's statutes with all six of the AAPA's key elements of a state PA Practice Act.

An anticipated benefit of the removal of the current physician to physician ratio in statute may be an increase in opportunities for PAs to provide primary care to Connecticut residents, including those who live in health professional shortage areas.

Thank you for your consideration of this information.

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