

Michael Solla  
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March 10, 2019

Re: HB 7159 An Act Addressing Opioid Use.

Senator Fonfara, Senator Witkos, Representative Cheeseman and members of the General Law Committee

My name is Mr. Michael Solla and I am the co-president of the Student Connecticut Chiropractic Association. I commend you and Governor Lamont for remaining diligent on this opioid crisis and pursuing ways to reduce the use and abuse of opioids that is close to the heart of many of us. This bill revises the general statutes for opioid prescription and control to help combat the opioid crisis and therefore we need to look at all areas of non-pharmaceutical treatments. While we focus on alleviating the opioid crisis through pharmaceutical treatment and control of prescriptions, we must also realize there are effective non-pharmaceutical methods of care. These methods can help alleviate the need of current opioid use, abuse and especially prevent the initiation of opioid use for those with various acute and chronic musculoskeletal pain conditions especially those with multiple health conditions. We submit it is essential this bill includes the disclosure and possible use of non-pharmacologic methods of care for those receiving opioid prescription, specifically as recommended by the Workgroup of the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council. Their report to the legislature recommended the following:

"Physical therapy, acupuncture, massage, and chiropractic care should be part of the response to chronic pain. Based on available literature regarding alternative opioid treatment therapies, we recommend, as a first phase, targeting changes in access to these four interventions for two types of chronic pain: low back pain and neck pain. Given experience and results of phase one, additional types of chronic pain could be added."

This recommendation is consistent with recommendations from many reputable government and non-profit healthcare organizations.

- The Surgeon General Pain Management Task Force reported the possible overreliance on medications to treat pain caused other unintended consequences, such as the increased prevalence of prescription medication abuse and has recommended that integrative and alternative therapeutics should be incorporated into a patient centered plan of care; and

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- The Joint Commission acknowledges that patients can expect that their health care providers to involve them in their assessment and management of pain and that non-pharmacological strategies have a role in the management of their pain; and
- CDC Guidelines for prescribing opioids has identified the fact that non-pharmacological therapies are a preferred treatment for chronic pain; and
- The National Association of Attorneys General are committed to ameliorate the over-prescription of opioids and encourages State Insurance Commissioners to assure non-opioid pain management including chiropractic care is adequately available to patients, and
- An Integrated Chronic Pain Program utilizing chiropractic care in Rhode Island demonstrated reduced medical costs by 27%, decreased the average number of ER visits by 61%, lowered the number of average total prescriptions by 63% and reduced the average number of opioid scripts by 86% for enrolled Community of Care Medicaid members with chronic pain conditions.

A personal take on the issue of opioid addiction is something that many do not want to talk about, but it must be dealt with head on. With your help by including all non-pharmaceutical alternatives we can fight this epidemic together.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Michael J Solla*

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