



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Monday, February 25, 2019**

**HB 5547, An Act Requiring Physicians To Educate Their Patients
Regarding The National Marrow Donor Program**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5547, An Act Requiring Physicians To Educate Their Patients Regarding The National Marrow Donor Program**. CHA supports the intent of the bill but has concerns with the approach proposed in the bill.

Before commenting on the bill, it's important to point out that Connecticut hospitals and health systems provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. They do more than treat illness and injury. They build a healthier Connecticut by improving community health, managing chronic illness, expanding access to primary care, preparing for emergencies, and addressing social determinants of health. By investing in the future of Connecticut's hospitals, we will strengthen our healthcare system and our economy, put communities to work, and deliver affordable care that Connecticut families deserve.

We support public health authorities encouraging public education on issues and opportunities that could improve overall health, including donating marrow, giving blood, or becoming an organ donor. We support the concept of having the Department of Public Health, in collaboration with bone marrow donation organizations, publish on its website educational materials concerning bone marrow. However, HB 5547, as written, creates a significant risk of interfering with appropriate medical judgment and the physician-patient relationship.

HB 5547 would require all physicians, including specialists, to educate every patient about the existence of the National Marrow Donor Program even if their patients are not candidates for the Program. It is not obvious that a patient could opt-out of being educated, or that a physician could choose not to provide the information on an unwilling or inappropriate patient.

Further, this approach would open the door to a list of topics that physicians would be required to say (or not say) to their patients, even if the message is not generally accepted medical practice and without regard to whether the statement is in the patient's interest.

Should the Committee choose to move forward with this legislation, we recommend that instead of the proposed process, that public health authorities be the ones to provide public education.

Thank you for your consideration of our position. For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.