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February 8, 2019

Members of the Connecticut Legislature Public Health Committee
State Representative
300 Capitol Avenue
Legislative Office Building, Room 2304
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Opposition to H.B. 5654

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Darrick Antell, MD, DMD and I am what is known as a “dual degree” physician. This means that in addition to obtaining a medical degree I also have a Dental degree having graduated from the Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine. I am actually a second generation dentist and I have lived in Greenwich, CT for 30 years where my wife and I have raised our five children.

While I currently run a private plastic surgery practice in New York City, I have maintained ongoing medical licensure in the State of Connecticut for 30 years. As part of my practice I commonly administer neurotoxins as well as injectable dermal fillers in the head and neck region— the subject of proposed Bill H.B. 5654.

I am writing in opposition of this proposed bill for several reasons. First and foremost is the issue of training. Having personally gone through both dental and medical/surgical training I can attest to the significantly more extensive training that physicians and surgeons receive with regard to management of virtually everything beyond the oral cavity. Dental training is four years of dental school....but does not include many of the life and death training that physicians obtain. My training as a physician involved a four year medical degree plus seven years of post-graduate residency training in surgery and the arduous board certification process.

I do not mean to denigrate the training or skill level of my dental colleagues but it's important to note that their training is *different* than that of a physician and, in my opinion, *inadequate* to perform injections of neurotoxins and dermal fillers in the head and neck. Both these procedures relate to the soft tissues of the body well beyond the oral cavity and supporting structures. In fact, the very wording of H.B. 5654 acknowledges the absence of adequate training with its attempt for standardization for dentists in this regard. I am also very troubled by the wording in the bill to allow “certain facial therapies” which are not well defined beyond neurotoxins and dermal fillers. ? Will facelifts be next?

The most commonly administered neurotoxin is Botulinum Toxin Type A (Botox, Dysport, Xeomin) – quite literally the most powerful poison ever discovered with no known antidote. Dermal fillers are literally

foreign bodies that must be injected with stringent sterile technique and that carry the widely known risks of embolization, tissue loss and even blindness.

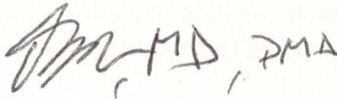
The media glamorizes injectables like Botox and various fillers but there is always a very real risk of embolization and tissue loss. Attached to this letter is a copy of an article from the Journal of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery: "BLINDNESS FOLLOWING COSMETIC INJECTIONS OF THE FACE" It documents over thirty cases of instant blindness from injection of fillers in the face !!

It's important to note that, because dentists do not hold hospital privileges in Connecticut, there is no pathway for hospital referral in the event of a significant infection, embolism or tissue loss and **these events have already occurred in our State**. In the event of an embolization of filler into the ophthalmic circulation time is of the essence with literally only minutes available to try to save a blind eye.

The proposed bill has nothing to do with patient safety and everything to do with money and expanding the scope of dental practice. Allowing dentists to inject botulinum toxin neuromodulators and dermal fillers without the benefit of medical training and post-graduate residency training would seriously jeopardize patient safety and reduce the standard of care in Connecticut. Holding both a medical as well as a dental degree I am acutely aware of the difference in training.

Thus, I would respectfully recommend that you NOT allow this bill to proceed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Antell MD, DM.D.", with a stylized flourish.

Darrick Antell, MD, DM.D.

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