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Public Health Committee Public Hearing

March 4th, 2019

Testimony: **H.B. 6543 AN ACT PERMITTING PHARMACISTS TO PRESCRIBE TOBACCO**

CESSATION PRODUCTS

Good Morning: Representative Steinberg, Senator Abrams, Ranking Member Petit, Ranking Member Somers and honorable members of the Public Health Committee, I want to thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on *H.B. 6543 An Act Permitting Pharmacists to Prescribe Tobacco Cessation Products* on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA). I am Mary Jane Williams Ph.D., RN current chairperson of Government Relations Committee for the Connecticut Nurses Association.

The *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence* report updated the previous version after screening an additional 2,700 articles to compile the latest distillation of a literature base of more than 8,700 research on best practices for treating tobacco use and dependence.¹ Based on the research, clinicians “strongly recommend the use of effective tobacco dependence counseling and medication treatments (emphasis added) to their patients who use tobacco, and that health systems, insurers, and purchasers assist clinicians in making

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK63952/>

such effective treatments.” Medications alone, are not as effective in treating tobacco use and dependence as counseling and medication therapy combined.

The Connecticut Nurses Association supports policies that help reduce the chronic disease of tobacco use and dependence, however, caution should be taken to assure that while allowing pharmacists to prescribe tobacco cessation products, negating the value of comprehensive treatment with counseling, even if unintended, should be avoided.

Respectfully submitted,

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