



**Connecticut Department of Public Health**

**Testimony Presented Before the Transportation Committee**

**February 13, 2019**

**Commissioner Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.  
860-509-7101**

**Senate Bill #66 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE NONEMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION OF ELDERLY PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CONFINED TO A STRETCHER**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) opposes Senate Bill #66, which would allow temporary and permanent livery permit holders to use stretcher vans to transport elderly persons and persons with disabilities who must be transported on a stretcher. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

DPH has significant health and safety concerns regarding the proposal. Stretcher van medical “attendants” must be trained on the medical livery standards necessary for patient transport. The bill language is silent as to whether “attendants” who would accompany the patient on the stretcher van have the knowledge to appropriately medically monitor the patient during transport. Medical monitoring of the patient during transport by properly trained personnel is imperative. Individuals who are transported by stretcher may be at risk for catastrophic incidents if their transportation is unmonitored or monitored by untrained, unequipped personnel.

The emergent and non-emergent transportation of stretcher patients in Connecticut, as it currently exists, provides for the proper medical surveillance and medical interventions, should the need arise. The Department has no knowledge of non-existing service or that the existing service is not adequate to properly serve the special needs of persons who are elderly and persons with disabilities.

Constituents have available to them the use of an “invalid coach.” This is a vehicle used exclusively for the transportation of non-ambulatory patients, who are not confined to stretchers. They are able to transport a person to and from either a medical facility or the patient’s home in nonemergency situations. Invalid coaches may also be utilized in emergency situations as a backup vehicle if a proper emergency vehicle is not available.

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In addition, the Department also has concerns regarding the loading and unloading of a stretcher patient by untrained and unequipped personnel. Under the current system, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel are trained to move individuals without harm, and use specialized equipment for circumstances where a stretcher may not be safely operated. Hazards that would prevent safe operation include unstable or unpaved terrain, inclines, declines, steps, stairs, unnavigable hallway corners in homes and cluttered or cramped rooms. A trained medical attendant must accompany the driver of a stretcher van to safely transport a patient.

Thank you for your consideration of this information.

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