

To: Sen. Lesser, Rep. Scanlon and Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee:

I am unable to testify in person for this extremely important issue, however I would like to express my support for H.B. No. 5254 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER.

It is imperative that the State of Connecticut has legislation that guarantees treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD) with medication assisted treatment (MAT) which can consist of methadone, buprenorphine (Suboxone) or naltrexone. This is especially true now that the 2019 CT statistics show a 20% increase after a relatively flat but still very high 2 year over dose rate.

It must also be understood by insurance companies that this addiction, as well as every other one, often requires multiple treatments of different modalities and venues. Outpatient treatment may work for some, but others require inpatient stays with intense immersion into treatment and separation from their environment.

MAT has shown great promise and has far better results than pure detox treatment. However for many detox works, but for many others MAT is far more effective. All treatments likely will require multiple attempts.

It is clear from statistics from all over the country that the opiate scourge is far from over. There was some hope that in CT, it was improving, but that clearly is not the case.

I have attached an article I wrote for the January 2020 issue of CT Medicine outlining our Suboxone program in the ER at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

I am happy to avail myself should you have any questions or wish more information. My contact information is below.

Thank you

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