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March 5, 2020

**Written testimony from
Connecticut State Medical Society
Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians
Connecticut Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery Society
Connecticut ENT Society
Connecticut Urology Society
In the Insurance Committee
On**

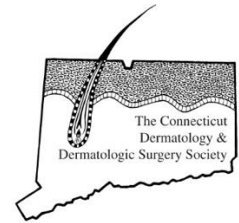
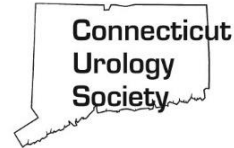
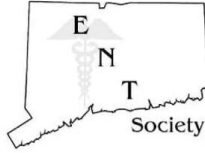
S.B. No. 345 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING THE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER TO STUDY AND REPORT ON ISSUES CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE.

Climate change represents one of the most significant threats to human health in the 21st century. In addition, climate change and healthcare are the two most important issues according to numerous exit polls of what Americans care about in the 2020 Presidential Election.

Medical Academies, Associations and Societies are developing initiatives to comprehensively assess the health risks of climate change and develop strategies to address both drivers and impacts. In the months ahead we ask this committee and the General Assembly to invite medical experts and stakeholders to share information and participate in frank discussions about the intersection of climate change and human health.

Areas we believe will be greatly affected by climate include:

- **Infectious and chronic disease** | Changes in temperature and rainfall may affect the lifespan, behavior, and geographic spread of insects like mosquitoes and other carriers of infectious disease. As a result, new populations may be exposed to diseases that were previously well controlled. Changing weather patterns may also influence levels of allergens and pollutants in the environment, exacerbating chronic conditions like asthma.
- **Extreme weather events** | Climate change increases the frequency, severity, and duration of events like hurricanes, wildfires, floods, heat waves, and droughts – all of which have serious consequences for health as well as implications for the design and location of hospitals and other health system infrastructure.



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- **Food and water** | Changes in temperature, precipitation, and carbon dioxide levels affect the quality and availability of food and water worldwide and may increase the risk of food- and water-borne illness. (Clean Water bills are a must).

- **Population migration, social stressors, and mental health** | Climate-related stressors such as sea level rise or food and water scarcity may trigger major population displacements – presenting a significant challenge for health and social systems in communities around the world. These and other consequences of climate change also have serious implications for the mental health of impacted individuals, first responders, and caregivers.

In closing, frank discussions must be undertaken about the negative impacts of climate change on populations, disproportionately affecting the health of the very young and the very old, people with severe illnesses, and impoverished or homeless individuals. Time is of the essence. We applaud the efforts of this committee to bring this important issue to public hearing and hope this committee will pass this important piece of “human health and condition” legislation out of committee. Thank you.