



**Connecticut Department of Public Health  
Testimony Presented Before the Labor and Public Employees  
Committee**

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**Acting Commissioner Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH  
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**House Bill 6596 An Act Concerning Managerial Salaries and Occupational Licensing Regulation**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) offers the following information regarding House Bill 6596, which requires a study of manager salaries and also makes revisions to specific licensure categories to ensure that the refusal, suspension or revocation of licenses, registrations or certificates not be automatic based on conviction of a felony, but only in the case of felonies reasonably related to the holder's ability to perform work safely and competently. The Department appreciates and supports the intention of this bill to eliminate barriers to occupational licensing for individuals with felony convictions.

The Connecticut General Statutes already prohibit the state from denying a license or certificate solely on the basis of a prior criminal conviction. C.G.S. Section 46a-80 prohibits such denial for each DPH licensed or certified profession without consideration of the following factors:

- the nature of the crime and its relationship to the job for which the person has applied;
- information pertaining to the degree of rehabilitation of the convicted person; and
- the time elapsed since the conviction or release.

The Department would like to share an example to highlight a potential unintended consequence of this well-intentioned proposal. Section 2(a)(6)(B) of this bill would prohibit DPH from considering a prior felony conviction in determining the eligibility of an applicant for a license to practice funeral directing and embalming. If this language is passed, the Department would be prohibited from considering a prior conviction of billing fraud related to funeral services if an applicant had such prior conviction in another state.

DPH rarely denies a license or certificate due to past felony convictions. On the rare occasion of a denial due to a felony, it is only after serious consideration and deliberation of the factors itemized above. The existing statutory provisions already apply to the professions listed in this bill and to every other profession licensed by the Department of Public Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

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