

**TESTIMONY**

Submitted by Tracy Wodatch, President and CEO  
The Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home

Public Health Committee Public Hearing  
**March 17, 2021**

**OPPOSE: SB 1030 AAC Long-Term Care Facilities**

Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Tracy Wodatch, President and CEO of the Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home. The Association is the united voice for the licensed, skilled home health and hospice agencies.

The Association and its members oppose SB 1030 and ask that our provider types, Home Health Agencies (which include all Hospice Agencies) be carved out of this legislation. In CT, the definition of “long-term care facility” includes a home health agency. I believe the intent of this bill is to address infection control/prevention staffing, programs and processes; ongoing training thereof; PPE supplies and the electronic monitoring of a resident within a skilled nursing facility, not a home health or a hospice agency.

By both federal and state regulations, our home health and hospice agencies are already required to include in our emergency preparedness plans, infection control and prevention policies and procedures as well as a Quality Assurance/Performance Improvement (QAPI) program. Each agency must have a QAPI committee that meets regularly and addresses any potential adverse events, emergency preparedness needs and ongoing educational needs of staff. Again, we ask that Home Health Agencies and Hospice Agencies be removed from this bill.

With regard to the quarterly N95 fit testing outlined in this bill, OSHA recommends annual fit testing which is what our agencies currently follow. We ask that you also consider aligning with OSHA for this mandate.

Regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) we are required to supply our staff with appropriate PPE based on both CDC, OSHA and DPH guidance. During the pandemic, our agencies were expected to maintain at least a 30-day supply based on census. This seems reasonable moving forward. As an aside, many agencies have small offices as Home Health and Hospice staff are on the road daily and not in the office. Having to maintain a 3-month supply would be overly burdensome for many agencies due to lack of storage capacity. Also, PPE has expiration dates that may require agencies to purge large quantities of PPE should they go unused.

Again, please remove Home Health and Hospice Agencies from the language in SB 1030.

Thank you,

Tracy Wodatch

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