

Public Hearing of the State Tax Panel
September 16, 2016

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Co-Chairman Dyson, Co-Chairman Nickerson and distinguished members of the panel, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony related to the recently imposed 6% provider tax on ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs).

We are fortunate to provide community-based ambulatory surgical care at the Fairfield Surgical Center. The center is AAAHC accredited, Medicare-certified facility staffed with board-certified anesthesiologists. Patients who choose surgical care at the Fairfield Surgical Center do so because they - and their doctors - recognize the benefits offered by our center, including:

- Personal presurgical preparation by our knowledgeable nursing staff.
- Minimal waiting times before, during, and after the surgical process and streamlined flow in presurgical, surgical, and recovery areas.
- Earlier return home—usually in a matter of hours after surgery.
- Quicker recovery times—the convenience of recovering in your own home generally makes recovery time quicker and easier than an in-hospital stay.
- Lower cost—since there are no hospital room charges and related hospital charges, costs are much lower for outpatient surgery.
- Reduced stress—most people prefer to recover in the comfort of their own homes rather than in the hospital.

However, a recently imposed onerous ASC provider tax on 6% on gross receipts jeopardizes our ability to deliver high quality, cost-effective care to the residents of Connecticut.

The provider tax is estimated to result in the closure of 25% of the ASCs throughout the state. The resulting closures will force patients seeking surgical care into higher cost hospital outpatient surgery departments.

For patients, limiting access to community-based ASCs will escalate their health care costs will through higher deductibles, co-payments and co-insurance. For our valued skilled workforce, the closures will result in significant job losses.

No other state, including the neighboring states of New York and Massachusetts, tax surgery centers at this level. In fact, Rhode Island recently repealed its 2% tax on ambulatory surgery centers as part of this year's state budget.

We respectfully request the panel recommend to the legislature to fully repeal the ASC provider tax during the 2016 legislative session. Only a full repeal will ensure the availability of convenient, high-quality, low cost and effective surgical care to the residents of Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for today's hearing.



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