



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
Thursday, February 28, 2019**

**HB 5975, An Act Concerning The Online Sale And Delivery Of Electronic Nicotine
Delivery Systems And Vapor Products**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5975, An Act Concerning The Online Sale And Delivery Of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Vapor Products**. CHA supports the intent of this bill and respectfully requests two changes.

Before commenting on the bill, it's important to point out that Connecticut hospitals and health systems provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. They do more than treat illness and injury. They build a healthier Connecticut by improving community health, managing chronic illness, expanding access to primary care, preparing for emergencies, and addressing social determinants of health. By investing in the future of Connecticut's hospitals, we will strengthen our healthcare system and our economy, put communities to work, and deliver affordable care that Connecticut families deserve.

HB 5975 would require a signature of someone 18 or older to receive vaping products delivered by a postal package service. CHA is supportive of measures that prohibit and deter youth smoking as we know that the best way to reduce health-associated harm caused by smoking is to abstain from smoking altogether or, at a minimum, delay the start of smoking. On a daily basis, caregivers in Connecticut hospitals see firsthand the impact of smoking-related disease and illness and, because of this, we wholeheartedly endorse common sense public policy initiatives that reduce or delay the start of smoking by youths.

With this in mind, CHA respectfully requests that the bill be amended by changing the age requirement for signature from 18 to 21 years of age. This change is in step with the movement to raise the age for an in-person purchase of tobacco and vaping products from 18 to 21.

We have a concern, however, that the definition of vapor product in section 19a-342a, which is used in HB 5975, is too broad and will interfere with patients and providers being able to purchase legitimate therapeutic and medical products, such as nebulizers for asthma. We believe this is not the intent of the bill and would impede access to care for asthma patients

and others with conditions requiring nebulizers and other approved medical equipment. We ask that the definition of vapor product in 19a-342a be changed to read as follows:

(4) "Vapor product" means any product that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit or other electronic, chemical or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, to produce a vapor that may or may not include nicotine, that is inhaled by the user of such product, but shall not include a medicinal or therapeutic product that is (A) used by a licensed health care provider to treat a patient in a health care setting; (B) used by or administered to a patient, as prescribed or directed by a licensed health care provider in any setting; or (C) FDA-approved as a drug, biological product, device, or combination product.

Thank you for your consideration of our position. For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.