



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 18, 2021**

SB 668, An Act Concerning A Fair Work Week Schedule

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 668, An Act Concerning A Fair Work Week Schedule**. CHA opposes this bill as drafted.

Before commenting on this bill, it is important to acknowledge that, since early 2020, Connecticut's hospitals and health systems have been at the center of the global public health emergency, acting as the critical partner in the state's response to COVID-19. Hospitals expanded critical care capacity, stood up countless community COVID-19 testing locations, and are a critical component of the vaccine distribution plan. Through it all, hospitals and health systems have continued to provide high-quality care for everyone, regardless of ability to pay. This tireless commitment to the COVID-19 response confirms the value of strong hospitals in Connecticut's public health infrastructure and economy and reinforces the need for a strong partnership between the state and hospitals.

As drafted, SB 668 would prohibit the employment practice of on-call shift scheduling.

Scheduling requirements for acute care hospitals and others in the healthcare environment are dynamic and adjusted to meet patient care needs. The very nature of acute care hospitals is unpredictable, requiring a great deal of flexibility to ensure the safe care of patients. Patient census fluctuates, often dramatically, day-to-day, and even within a given day. Hospitals have core staffing plans but must be able to respond with additional resources to meet patient needs (e.g., the sudden increase in patients requiring hospitalization for influenza or the arrival in the Emergency Department of victims of a serious accident).

This is a time of unprecedented change in healthcare, and Connecticut hospitals are leading the charge to transform the way care is provided. They are focused on providing safe, accessible, equitable, affordable, patient-centered care for all, and they are finding innovative solutions to integrate and coordinate care to better serve their patients and communities. In addition, and as we noted earlier, hospitals have spent the past year in an around-the-clock response to the COVID-19 pandemic. An integral piece of our ongoing response has been the ability to be flexible in meeting the staffing challenges brought about by the pandemic.

The provisions of SB 668 would limit severely the flexibility hospitals require to respond to patients' needs. This flexibility is necessary for hospitals to respond to countless unanticipated health events our communities count on us to address; the most recent example being saving lives during the pandemic.

With this in mind, we urge the Committee not to take action on SB 668. If the Committee intends to take action on SB 668, we request that the Committee exclude "acute care hospitals and other healthcare settings" from any requirements imposed in the proposed legislation.

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