



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
Monday, February 28, 2011**

**HB 6437, An Act Concerning The Development Of A Uniform
Treatment Authorization Form For Mental Health Services**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to present testimony concerning **HB 6437, An Act Concerning The Development Of A Uniform Treatment Authorization Form For Mental Health Services**.

HB 6437 tasks the Attorney General with creating a uniform consent for mental health treatment, with input from the Department of Public Health, the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Insurance. CHA is concerned that the bill does not include hospital stakeholders in this important process.

There are countless regulatory, accreditation, and ethical standards that must be considered when creating any uniform consent forms, particularly for mental health issues. Hospitals are in a unique position to provide input on how to best navigate the complexities of these various factors, which include patient notification rules, patient privacy rights, health information exchange protocols, and practitioners' ethical rules for care delivery. Numerous sources of law and guidance must be reviewed when making a workable consent form or process, including not only HIPAA, as noted in the bill, but also reaching far beyond HIPAA to include, for example, the Medicare Conditions of Participation, Joint Commission rules, HITECH obligations under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration rules, and many other federal and state laws that affect patient care decisions in the area of mental and behavioral health.

To avoid any unforeseen negative effects on patients' ability to access mental health services, we respectfully request that the Connecticut Hospital Association be part of the team that is consulted when any such form is devised.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.