



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 27, 2013**

HB 6000, An Act Concerning Complaints About Patient Care In Hospitals

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 6000, An Act Concerning Complaints About Patient Care In Hospitals**. CHA opposes the bill.

HB 6000 would add, as state law, a requirement that hospitals make a representative available at all times to receive complaints concerning patient care. The bill would also require hospitals to display prominently and make available the contact information of this representative.

CHA opposes this bill because it could create confusion and conflict with well-established federal mandates and national standards.

The bill is redundant, and when fully drafted to eliminate redundancies, would most likely conflict with a more complex set of federal regulations and national accreditation standards that acute care hospitals in Connecticut already must follow. The federal Medicare Conditions of Participation include several regulations that directly address patients' rights to make complaints. These federal regulations specifically include detailed steps and policy requirements about patient complaints and grievances to ensure that consistent and verifiable processes for patient complaints are observed in each hospital and across all hospitals. The Joint Commission, which accredits all acute care hospitals in Connecticut, mandates how a hospital must receive and process complaints in a patients' rights standard that is expressly designed to align with the rules set forth in the federal Medicare Conditions of Participation.

Additionally, current Connecticut law, Section 19a-550a, requires written notice to patients of their rights, and requires that a hospital provide patients (or their families where appropriate) notice "of the patient's rights enumerated in the federal Medicare conditions of participation" including "information regarding the means of redress or complaint available to patients, including, but not limited to, contact information for the Department of Public Health." Section 19a-550a of the General Statutes recognizes the importance of ensuring that the federal standards are not accidentally weakened or undercut by well-meaning, but potentially confusing, state law standards.

For these reasons, we urge you not to support HB 6000.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

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