



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 20, 2013**

**SB 64, An Act Concerning Notice To Patients
Of The Cost To Copy Or Transfer Medical Records**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 64, An Act Concerning Notice To Patients Of The Cost To Copy Or Transfer Medical Records**. CHA opposes the bill because it would have unintended consequences that could interfere with patient rights and the timely release of records.

SB 64 seeks to amend Chapter 369 of the General Statutes to mandate prior notice to patients of the fees charged for copying or transferring medical records. We note that the fees that providers are allowed to charge are set by statute, not by providers, and are assessed on the number of pages in the record requested, plus postage and costs to copy films or other materials.

CHA supports the goal of improving patients' ability to access and control their medical information, but we believe that adding a mandatory pre-notification requirement on a universal basis, not just when a patient requests it, will have unintended consequences of potentially delaying release of all records, and could jeopardize the ability of patients and downstream providers to safely rely on the completeness of the records received.

Many patients would prefer that the requested records be sent as soon as possible. A pre-notice requirement will necessarily slow down the ability to respond to a request because it will require multiple communications between a provider and patient, and is likely to result in a patient needing to contact a provider several times before the record would be ready for release. Currently, only one request is needed. Additionally, we believe that most providers currently respond to requests for a calculation of the fees when a patient asks for that information.

There is a solution that meets this concern that is in the process of being implemented across the healthcare continuum. The multi-billion dollar, near-universal adoption of electronic health records will provide patients with a faster, easier, and more transparent option for access to records. The vast majority of providers will be completing the necessary upgrades to their record systems by the end of 2015, many sooner than that.

We urge patience in the interim, and would be happy to work with the committee to address concerns surrounding patient record access and transparency of fees.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

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