

**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 27, 2014**

SB 24, An Act Concerning The Governor's Recommendations Regarding Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Youth Smoking Prevention

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 24, An Act Concerning The Governor's Recommendations Regarding Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Youth Smoking Prevention**. CHA supports this bill.

Hospitals play a critical role in improving the health and quality of life of people in our communities. All of our lives have, in some way, been touched by a hospital: through the birth of a child, a life saved by prompt action in an emergency room, or the compassionate end-of-life care for someone we love. Or perhaps our son, daughter, husband, wife, or friend works for, or is a volunteer at, a Connecticut hospital.

In addition to treating everyone who comes through their doors 24 hours a day, regardless of ability to pay, Connecticut hospitals are deeply invested in the health of our communities. In 2012, Connecticut hospitals spent \$1.2 billion on community benefit initiatives, and provided more than 12.3 million services to individuals and families.

Connecticut hospitals are committed to initiatives that allow for access to safe, equitable, high-quality care. Providing culturally competent care, eliminating disparities, and achieving health equity are also priorities of Connecticut hospitals.

SB 24 seeks to prevent adolescents and youths from obtaining electronic nicotine delivery systems and imposes penalties on those who provide these devices and tobacco products to the state's youth. The provisions of SB 24 will go a long way toward improving the health and well-being of generations of citizens who might otherwise start a life-long addiction to nicotine and tobacco.

For years, Connecticut hospitals have worked with community partners to prevent tobacco use, as we know that the best way to prevent illness and death associated with tobacco use is to never begin smoking or using tobacco products. Recently introduced to the marketplace, electronic nicotine delivery systems have the potential to addict youths to nicotine and lead them to use other tobacco products.

Generations of Connecticut families have trusted Connecticut hospitals to provide care we can count on. In supporting SB 24, hospitals across the state are also committing to improving, through prevention and education, the health of our communities.

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