



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2016**

SB 290, An Act Concerning The Sale And Purchase Of Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Vapor Products And Signage Concerning The Use Of Such Products And Systems

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **Proposed SB 290, An Act Concerning The Sale And Purchase Of Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Vapor Products And Signage Concerning The Use Of Such Products And Systems**. CHA supports the bill, but additional changes are needed.

Before commenting on the bill, it's important to point out that Connecticut hospitals provide core healthcare services to all of the people in Connecticut, 24 hours a day, regardless of ability to pay. Connecticut hospitals offer safe, accessible, equitable, affordable, patient-centered care that protects and improves peoples' lives.

SB 290 makes a number of revisions to existing laws on tobacco products. CHA supports the changes and specifically appreciates the added clarity indicating that a smoke-free building, such as a hospital, is not required to place no smoking signs in every room or elevator.

SB 290 includes a modification to last year's legislation that inadvertently sweeps otherwise inoffensive medical devices – including some inhalers, nebulizers, humidifiers and atomizers, and other common devices used for asthma or COPD – into the same category as e-cigarettes.

The modification in SB 290 does not completely address the problem. It solves part of the problem by allowing the use of these medical devices in a healthcare setting, but the proposed change in SB 290 is too limiting because many of the devices in question are self-administered by the patient or family at home or in other settings.

We urge you to revise the definitions for these statutes to exempt these other products in a way that will promote safe and effective care, as follows:

“Vapor product” means any product, except a medicinal or therapeutic product used by a licensed health care provider to treat a patient in a health care setting or by a patient in any setting as directed or prescribed by a licensed practitioner, that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit or other electronic, chemical or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, to produce a vapor that may or may not include nicotine, that is inhaled by the user of such product; and

These changes are needed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers for patients with conditions that are treated with legitimate vapor devices, including for asthma and COPD, which are conditions that have a significant impact on our vulnerable populations.

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