



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2016**

SB 313, AN ACT CONCERNING BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTS

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 313, An Act Concerning Biological Products**.

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.

CHA appreciates the intent of SB 313, which seeks to create a parallel process – similar to the existing process allowing a pharmacist to substitute a generic drug for a brand-name drug – for the substitution of biological products that the FDA has approved as being interchangeable. Essentially, the bill seeks to create a mechanism that honors patient choice when it may be appropriate to substitute an interchangeable biological product for another specifically prescribed biological product. Biological products (also known as biologics) are medications but, unlike conventional drugs, they are complex and derived from living organisms.

Unfortunately, due the complexity of the FDA approval processes and definitions applicable to biologics, which vary substantially from those of conventional brand-name and generic drugs, this bill, as written, cannot serve its intended purpose and will result in barriers for access to care for patients being served at pharmacies. Additionally, the bill, in trying to provide a way for pharmacies and providers to share information, creates an infeasible – if not impossible – requirement that prescribers be able to access the dispensing records of a pharmacy, even though the pharmacy is a separate legal entity with independent privacy and security obligations to its patients.

CHA would be happy to work with the Committee and the Department to clarify the language of the bill in a way that will protect both patient choice and patient privacy, but not cause substantial technical confusion in the ordering and filling of prescriptions for biological products.

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