



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 27, 2018**

SB 200, An Act Requiring Lyme Disease Testing In Certain Circumstances

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 200, An Act Requiring Lyme Disease Testing In Certain Circumstances**. CHA opposes SB 200.

Before commenting on the bill, it's important to point out that Connecticut hospitals provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. Connecticut hospitals are dynamic, complex organizations that are continually working to find innovative ways to better serve patients and communities and build a healthier Connecticut. They are developing integrated delivery networks with physicians, services, and technology to make sure patients receive high quality, coordinated, cost-effective, patient focused, and equitable care. By investing in the future of Connecticut's hospitals, we will strengthen our healthcare system and our economy, put communities to work, and deliver affordable care that Connecticut families deserve.

SB 200 seeks to mandate that *all* physicians and physician assistants, regardless of specialty, area of expertise, or relationship with a patient, administer or order a blood test for Lyme disease for every patient with physical pain (where the cause of the pain has not been determined), if the patient has not already been diagnosed with Lyme disease.

The bill is counter to the longstanding tradition of not legislatively mandating the practice of medicine and interfering with the judgment of medical professionals. CHA urges this Committee to oppose this type of directive, particularly when there is not universal support in the broader medical community on the topic involved.

There are various other health issues that do enjoy universal support in the broader medical community and that are appropriate for public health legislation. These include, for example, the desirability of screening tests for Hepatitis C (a contagious disease, transmittable between humans), which has almost universal support in the medical and public health communities. The approach to Hepatitis C testing adopted by the Legislature, found at Section 20-7o of the Connecticut General Statutes, is balanced and appropriate. It sets guidelines derived from

evidence-based medicine, whereby primary care providers will offer to perform or order the test. That framework is appropriate because of its specificity and adherence to well-established processes for addressing public health issues, and implementing the consensus of health experts.

In contrast, the proposed mandate set forth in SB 200 does not follow that well-established process. CHA urges you to oppose SB 200.

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