



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
February 11, 2019**

HB 5444, An Act Requiring The Licensure Of Art Therapists

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **Proposed HB 5444, An Act Requiring The Licensure Of Art Therapists**. CHA has concerns with the bill as currently written, and therefore opposes the bill.

Before commenting on the bill, it's important to point out that Connecticut hospitals and health systems provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. They do more than treat illness and injury. They build a healthier Connecticut by improving community health, managing chronic illness, expanding access to primary care, preparing for emergencies, and addressing social determinants of health. 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.

The Connecticut Hospital Association supports the licensure of Art Therapists and the title protection of "art therapist" and "certified art therapists." However, we are opposed to the new language in Section 2 (a) "*No person may practice art therapy unless licensed pursuant to section 3 of this act or issued a temporary permit pursuant to section 4 of this act.*" A number of otherwise licensed or qualified behavioral health professionals use "art therapy" in their practice today and this language, while perhaps well-intended, would limit their current scope of practice. While the language in Section 2 (c) (1) attempts to address this, we believe it creates an internal conflict within the language and confusion for providers.

Should the bill move forward, we encourage the Committee to delete the language in Section 2 (a). As always, CHA remains available to work with the Committee on legislation that impacts hospitals and providers to ensure that there are no unintended consequences.

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