



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 25, 2020**

SB 1 and HB 5175, An Act Concerning Diabetes And High Deductible Health Plans

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 1 and HB 5175, An Act Concerning Diabetes And High Deductible Health Plans**. CHA has concerns with section 3 of both bills.

Before commenting on this bill, it is important to point out that Connecticut hospitals and health systems provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay, and work to improve the health of those who live in our communities. Supporting Connecticut's hospitals strengthens our healthcare system and our economy.

SB 1 and HB 5175, among other things, would expand health insurance coverage for prescription drugs and equipment and supplies used to treat diabetes, and restrict cost sharing for such drugs, equipment, and supplies. The bills also require the Department of Social Services to study and report regarding the feasibility of implementing a low-income diabetes assistance fund. CHA supports these goals.

However, CHA opposes section 3 in each of the bills because it would require licensed pharmacists to dispense insulin drugs, equipment, and supplies without a prescription, and without input from or consultation with prescribing practitioners.

Section 3 is inconsistent with several federal laws and requirements. Specifically, it violates the Medicare Conditions of Participation (CoP) in that it would require the dispensing of drugs, equipment, and supplies without a prescription in an inpatient hospital setting. Medicare CoP dictate how care is delivered in the inpatient hospital care setting. The penalties for violating the CoP are strict and severe, and can include being banned from the Medicare program entirely.

Section 3 also could violate federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements in situations when drugs are prescription only. In those instances, a healthcare provider with express prescribing authority must write the prescription. A pharmacist would not qualify. Violations of FDA requirements could result in a hospital losing its ability to dispense drugs or write prescriptions.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to delete section 3.

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