



**TESTIMONY OF  
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE  
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE  
Thursday, January 28, 2021**

**HB 5307, An Act Concerning Price Gouging**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning HB 5307, **An Act Concerning Price Gouging**. CHA supports the bill.

Before commenting on this bill, it is important to acknowledge that, since early 2020, Connecticut's hospitals and health systems have been at the center of the global public health emergency, acting as the critical partner in the state's response to COVID-19. Hospitals expanded critical care capacity, stood up countless community COVID-19 testing locations, and are a critical component of the vaccine distribution plan. Through it all, hospitals and health systems have continued to provide high-quality care for everyone, regardless of ability to pay. This tireless commitment to the COVID-19 response confirms the value of strong hospitals in Connecticut's public health infrastructure and economy, and reinforces the need for a strong partnership between the state and hospitals.

This bill will clarify and improve Connecticut statutes pertaining to price gouging. These laws are intended to hold accountable sellers who take advantage of a state of emergency by unreasonably increasing the prices of essential goods and services. HB 5307 will clarify that Connecticut's price-gouging laws apply to each seller in the chain of distribution, including but not limited to a manufacturer, supplier, wholesaler, distributor, or retailer. The bill will improve current law by expressly prohibiting the sale, rental, lease, or offer to sell, rent, or lease an item within the chain of distribution for an amount that represents an unconscionably excessive price at any location subject to a precipitating event, which includes a declaration of public health emergency. The changes proposed in HB 5307 are timely and necessary given the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Connecticut hospitals are on the front lines in the battle to diagnose, treat, and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Price gouging related to personal protective equipment and other types of medical goods and services during this public health emergency threaten the health and safety of healthcare providers and patients. Such unconscionable business acts stand to impede the ability of hospitals and other care providers to safely and effectively respond to the global pandemic. CHA and Connecticut hospitals support every effort to protect our medical providers and to ensure that they have reasonable access to all forms of necessary medical supplies and essential goods and services. We also support holding profiteers accountable, whose actions exploit the healthcare providers and citizens of our state during public health emergencies.

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