



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 3, 2021**

**HB 6484, An Act Concerning Recommendations
By The Department Of Transportation**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 6484, An Act Concerning Recommendations By The Department Of Transportation**. CHA supports Sections 16 and 17 of this 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.

HB 6484 expands the seat belt law to require that all persons wear seat belts regardless of where they sit within a motor vehicle. Unrestrained passengers are at higher risk of injury or death, no matter where they are in the vehicle. Unrestrained passengers are also more likely to become a projectile and injure others.

All too often, caregivers in hospital emergency departments and trauma centers are called on to treat patients injured in both minor and serious traffic accidents. HB 6484 would align Connecticut statute with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines for passenger safety, which recommends that seat belts be worn by every person in the vehicle, on every trip.

HB 6484 allows the state to take proactive steps to limit the pain and suffering caused by injury due to not wearing a seat belt. As such, CHA supports this measure and other safety initiatives that are known to reduce the risk of serious injury and death.

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