



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 17, 2021**

HB 6549, An Act Concerning Amendments To Marriage Certificates

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 6549, An Act Concerning Amendments To Marriage Certificates**. CHA respectfully requests an amendment to 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.

CHA would like to request the following amendment that will resolve an issue that has been identified by hospital patients. From time to time hospital patients are unable, due to medical reasons, to appear in person at the registrar's office to obtain a marriage license. Our amendment seeks to provide some relief to these patients by requiring registrars to make all reasonable efforts to accommodate a patient in this unique circumstance. Current statute is silent on making the accommodation and is sometimes interpreted by registrars as requiring application to be made in person at the registrar's office. The amendment will provide additional clarity to registrars and the public as to what is permitted.

Specifically, please add the following new section to the bill:

Section 46b-25 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

No license may be issued by the registrar until both persons have appeared before the registrar and made application for a license. The registrar shall take all reasonable steps to accommodate a person who is unable to appear at the registrar's office due to medical reasons that render such person confined to a medical facility. Such person who is unable to appear shall provide and attest to the registrar the reasons they are unable to appear. The registrar shall issue a license to any two persons eligible to marry under this chapter. The license shall be completed in its entirety, dated, signed and sworn to by each applicant and shall state each applicant's name, age, race, birthplace, residence, whether single, widowed or divorced and whether under the supervision or control of a conservator or guardian. The Social Security numbers of both persons shall be recorded in the "administrative purposes" section of the license. If the license is signed and sworn to by the applicants on different dates, the later date shall be deemed the date of application.

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