



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
Friday, March 18, 2022**

**HB 5463, An Act Concerning The Authority Of The Office Of The
Attorney General To Bring An Action Against A Seller Who
Engages In Price Gouging During A Disaster Or Emergency**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5463, An Act Concerning The Authority Of The Office Of The Attorney General To Bring An Action Against A Seller Who Engages In Price Gouging During A Disaster Or Emergency**. CHA supports the bill.

Since early 2020, hospitals and health systems have been at the center of Connecticut's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, acting as a vital partner with the state and our communities. Hospitals expanded critical care capacity, procured essential equipment and supplies, and stood up countless community COVID-19 testing locations. Hospitals have been an essential component of the statewide vaccine distribution plan including efforts to reach and serve historically under-resourced communities disproportionately affected by the virus.

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 5463 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 a public health emergency. The changes proposed in HB 5463 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 threatens 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 supports 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.