



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Monday, March 28, 2022**

SB 477, An Act Concerning The Public Health Of Residents Of The State

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 477, An Act Concerning The Public Health Of Residents Of The State**. CHA would like to share comments on Sections 5 and 7 of the bill.

SB 477 contains several sections that affect the public health statutes, and CHA is providing comments on two of those sections.

First, we would like to address Section 5, related to maternal and child health. CHA is committed to maternal and child health and the health of pregnant and postpartum people through CHA's leadership roles in maternal health initiatives such as the Alliance for Innovation in Maternal Health (AIM), the Connecticut Perinatal Quality Collaborative (CPQC), and Parents Recovering from Opioid Use Disorder (PROUD). Maternal mental health conditions such as depressive and anxiety disorders are common in pregnancy and the postpartum period, with one in ten women having a significant mental health condition during pregnancy or the postpartum period. The links between mental health and maternal health are critically important as mental health conditions directly and indirectly increase maternal morbidity and mortality, as well as infant and child well-being.

CHA supports the intent of Section 5 of the bill in its efforts to advance maternal mental health, but urges the Committee to carefully consider the approach requiring birthing hospitals to create a patient portal through which a postpartum patient can virtually access educational materials on maternal mental health. The creation of this portal could be duplicative with other efforts state agencies are currently undertaking such as the DMHAS ACCESS Mental Health for MOMS program and other efforts currently being explored by DSS in a maternal mental health bundle.

In addition, there is already an efficient and effective means to advance education on maternal mental health within the current hospital patient portal system. CHA suggests that state agencies work together to align current approaches to addressing maternal mental health prior to requiring the creation of a new patient portal for this singular purpose. We welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee and the involved agencies to develop an effective and efficient educational model.

Second, Section 7 seeks to establish a Commission on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention. For a number of years CHA and its member hospitals have worked in collaboration with community partners to reduce the impact of gun violence in our communities. CHA seeks opportunities to continue this work with stakeholders and policymakers, and respectfully requests the Committee consider amending the bill to ensure the commission aligns its work with work already under way.

CHA has submitted detailed [comments](#) on Section 7 of SB 477, which can be found in testimony submitted on a similar bill, HB 5397, An Act Declaring Gun Violence A Public Health Crisis And Establishing The Office Of Gun Violence Prevention And Advisory Council On Gun Violence Prevention And Intervention.

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