



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Monday, March 13, 2023**

HB 6835, An Act Concerning Various Revisions To The Public Health Statutes

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 6835, An Act Concerning Various Revisions To the Public Health Statutes**. CHA provides the following comments on the bill as drafted.

Connecticut hospitals continue to meet the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and are now facing new challenges of treating sicker patients than they saw before the pandemic, with a dedicated but smaller workforce who are exemplary but exhausted. They are also experiencing significant financial hardships brought on by record inflation. Through it all, hospitals have been steadfast, providing high-quality care for everyone who walks through their doors, regardless of ability to pay.

Section 1 of HB 6835 seeks to clarify the role of certified surgical technologists. This is an issue that CHA has worked on with the Association of Surgical Technologists. Working cooperatively with those stakeholders, we reached agreement on language that both clarifies the role and credentials of certified surgical technologists while still allowing others with appropriate experience, background, and training to perform similar jobs.

HB 6835 as drafted includes some but not all of that agreed-to language that creates the right balance for all involved. The following changes are necessary to avoid blocking various appropriately experienced and trained individuals from working in this area.

The following revisions reflect the agreed-to language that we urge you to adopt.

Starting at lines 29, edit to read as follow:

(b) A health care facility shall not employ or otherwise retain any person to perform surgical technology services unless such person meets one or more of the following:

(1) has successfully completed a nationally accredited surgical technology program, and [(2)] holds and maintains certification as a surgical technologist from a national certifying body that certifies surgical technologists recognized by the Department of Public Health;

(2) Has successfully completed an accredited surgical technologist program but has not, as of the date of hire, obtained the certified surgical technologist certification required in clause (b)(1); provided however that such certification shall be obtained within 18 months of the graduation date;

(3) Acted as a surgical technologist in a health care facility on or before October 1, 2023, provided that a health care facility shall obtain proof of such prior experience from the individual and make it available upon request of the Department of Public Health;

(4) Has successfully completed a training program for surgical technology in the armed forces of the United States, the National Guard, or in the United States Public Health Service; or

(5) Has been designated by the health care facility as being competent to perform specific tasks or functions listed in this section based on specialized training or specific experience, including but not limited to phlebotomists, nuclear medicine technologists, ultrasound technologists, and central service technicians, provided the health care facility shall retain a list of such designations.

(c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit an individual from performing surgical technology tasks or functions if such person is acting within the scope of such person's license, certification, recognition or designation, or is a student or intern under the direct supervision of a health care provider.

(d) Any health care facility that employs or otherwise retains a surgical technologist shall submit to the Department of Public Health, upon request, documentation demonstrating that such surgical technologist is in compliance with the requirements set forth in this section.

Should the bill move forward, we request the changes outlined above. We stand ready to work with the Committee, the Department of Public Health, and the Association of Surgical Technologists on this issue.

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