



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 22, 2024**

SB 135, An Act Establishing A Maximum Charge For Certain Occupational Licenses, Certifications, Permits And Registrations

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 135, An Act Establishing A Maximum Charge For Certain Occupational Licenses, Certifications, Permits And Registrations**. CHA supports SB 135, in particular sections 25 and 26, which reduce licensing fees for pharmacists.

Connecticut hospitals are critical to their communities. They are confronting the challenges posed by a post-pandemic healthcare system with an exemplary healthcare workforce that continues to provide outstanding care. But challenges remain. Hospitals are treating sicker patients, it continues to be challenging to hire and retain staff, and the financial headwinds are grave. Through it all, hospitals are steadfast, providing high-quality 24-hour care for everyone who walks through their doors, focusing on making Connecticut's healthcare system more equitable, and driving world-class innovation right here in Connecticut.

Connecticut continues to face a shortage in healthcare workers. The shortage is broad, encompassing clinical and nonclinical positions and extending across disciplines. While healthcare workforce shortages existed pre-pandemic, the pandemic exacerbated them both by slowing the educational pipeline for skilled healthcare workers and affecting recruitment and retention. It is why an all-hands-on-deck approach is needed to address the shortages, including by reducing licensing fees.

Sections 25 and 26 of SB 135 would reduce the licensing fees for pharmacists on application and renewal and for pharmacists seeking a temporary permit to practice. While seemingly a minor measure to address the healthcare workforce shortage, examining and addressing every barrier ensures a comprehensive approach to supporting and growing the healthcare workforce.

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