



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
Tuesday, March 4, 2008**

**SB 520, An Act Concerning The Unauthorized Release Of
Personal Consumer Information**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 520, An Act Concerning The Unauthorized Release Of Personal Consumer Information**. As written, CHA opposes this bill.

SB 520 is designed to protect a customer's privacy by ensuring that personal information obtained by a business is not shared with any third parties without first obtaining the customer's "express written permission." Unfortunately, the protections in this bill would have unexpected results in the context of healthcare, where these customers are patients.

Similar protections were considered – and ultimately rejected – during discussions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) rulemaking by the federal government. As determined during the HIPAA debate, if a healthcare provider needed advance, written permission to share personal information with other businesses or providers, patients would be inconvenienced at best, and put in danger at worst. Some examples of the potentially absurd results include the following: a physician could not call a prescription into a pharmacy; an ambulance service could not be told the address of a person who needs assistance; surgery could not be scheduled; and specialists could not be consulted.

CHA urges you to either reject this bill or revise it so that no disruptions in care occur. A revision exempting healthcare providers, or exempting exchange of information for a legitimate business purpose, would reduce the potential for harm.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.