



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 27, 2018**

SB 197, An Act Concerning Biological Products

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 197, An Act Concerning Biological Products**. CHA opposes Section 2 of the bill.

Before commenting on the bill, it's important to point out that Connecticut hospitals provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. Connecticut hospitals are dynamic, complex organizations that are continually working to find innovative ways to better serve patients and communities and build a healthier Connecticut. They are developing integrated delivery networks with physicians, services, and technology to make sure patients receive high quality, coordinated, cost-effective, patient focused, and equitable care. By investing in the future of Connecticut's hospitals, we will strengthen our healthcare system and our economy, put communities to work, and deliver affordable care that Connecticut families deserve.

SB 197 addresses biological products, as that term is defined in federal law. Biological products are a specific category of substances that can be prescribed for human use, and include oxygen, vaccines, and blood products. Prescriptions are more commonly for "drug products," which are a different, broader category of substances that can be used to treat humans. But biological products are also often prescribed.

Existing state law contains steps addressing how substitutions (including generic substitutes) may be made for drug products. The stated purpose of SB 197 is to create similar steps to govern substitution of an "interchangeable biological product" in place of a specifically prescribed biological product, as outlined in Section 1 of the bill. Importantly, Section 1 of the bill expressly excludes pharmacies operated by a licensed hospital from the new requirements for biological products. CHA does not oppose Section 1 of the bill.

CHA opposes Section 2 of the bill because it goes well beyond setting rules for substitutions of biologicals and, instead, seeks to create a sweeping new mandate on all prescribers relating to prescriptions for all biologicals – not just substitutions – in a manner that is unworkable and problematic.

For example, this new requirement could put patients at risk for access to care that is urgently or emergently needed, and would be virtually impossible to implement in most institutional care settings.

CHA urges this Committee to continue the longstanding tradition of not legislatively mandating the practice of medicine and interfering with the judgment of medical professionals. CHA urges the Committee to delete Section 2 of the bill.

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