



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Monday, March 6, 2023**

HB 6818, An Act Concerning Patient Access To Reproductive Health Care

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 6818, An Act Concerning Patient Access To Reproductive Health Care**. CHA opposes the bill.

We have the privilege of living in a state that is standing up for patient and provider rights relating to reproductive healthcare and gender-affirming care. To date, the legislature, Governor, Attorney General, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Consumer Protection, and others have been stalwarts in working to ensure these rights are not eroded. We appreciate those efforts in what is certain to be a long battle.

At the same time, we urge caution in how Connecticut reflects these protections so that we are not accidentally disrupting existing frameworks that work in Connecticut. The frameworks that already exist and are working in Connecticut make HB 6818 unnecessary.

HB 6818 provides beginning on lines 34:

“Sec. 2. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2023) (a) If a health care provider is acting in good faith, within the provider's scope of practice, education, training and experience, including the provider's specialty areas of practice and board certification, and within the accepted standard of care, a health care entity may not limit the health care provider's provision of the following:

(1) Medically accurate information and counseling to a patient regarding the patient's health status, including, but not limited to, diagnosis, prognosis, recommended treatment, treatment alternatives and any potential risks to the patient's health or life.....

As written “medically accurate information” could be viewed as information that is peer reviewed in medical journals or publications. This immediately allows providers with fringe beliefs to escape legitimate review and oversight based on their version of medicine as long as there are peer reviewed materials that agree with them. That’s a mistake Connecticut should not make.

There are a staggering number of peer reviewed publications that could be used – immediately – to support all manner of medicine that differs from current Connecticut law and policies, for example: banning abortion, banning gender-affirming care, banning childhood vaccines, and banning routine adult vaccines.

HB 6818 also would stop a medical practice from having evidenced-based policies or procedures if one clinician disagreed and could point to a peer reviewed article in their favor, limit or stop the normal and expected activities of the medical staff in oversight of clinicians, and prohibit hospital and surgical center operating room procedures and normal screening and scheduling.

The urgency created by other states' failure to stand by patients who seek reproductive healthcare services is real.

But that does not mean the landscape in Connecticut needs massive alteration.

CHA believes that ***HB 6820, An Act Preventing An Adverse Action Against A Health Care Provider Due To An Adverse Action Taken By Another State As A Result Of Such Provider's Involvement In The Termination Of A Pregnancy*** with modifications, as indicated in our testimony on that bill, is a better pathway to clarifying where Connecticut stands on access to reproductive healthcare.

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