



Raised Bill 285 - An Act Allowing Medical Assistants to Administer Vaccines
Written Testimony Presented to the Public Health Committee
February 1, 2021

Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee:

On behalf of the physicians and physicians-in-training of the Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians, Connecticut ENT Society, Connecticut Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery Society and the Connecticut Urology Society, organizations representing over 800 practicing physicians in Connecticut, we thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on **Raised Bill 285, An Act Allowing Medical Assistants to Administer Vaccines.**

Every member of the Public Health Committee is well acquainted with the challenges faced by individuals, businesses, legislators and government agencies that have been created by the global pandemic.

The challenges faced by the medical community are, perhaps, the most daunting.

Medical practices have been forced to not only provide essential medical care for our patients, but also to simultaneously restructure the delivery of health care “on the fly” as we strive to maintain safety and protection to our patients, our staffs and ourselves. This has required innumerable adjustments to our office layouts and workflows, as well as requiring Personal Protective Equipment and cleaning and sanitizing every element of our office workspace. The timely and efficient distribution and administration of the newly developed vaccines is essential to the restoration of all aspects of our lives and our society. The massive and ongoing efforts to control the COVID-19 virus are creating a “new normal” society which will continue to improve and transform for some time to come.

We do support the concept of allowing well-trained Medical Assistants to administer vaccinations under the guidance of licensed care providers. It has long been the position of our members that the preservation of high-quality care and patient safety is best served under the leadership and supervision of the physicians who are the most highly trained members of the health care team. The delegation of duties within a medical practice has historically been at the discretion and direction of the physician. Under this model, physicians bear the responsibilities and risks of these actions.

We have concerns about identifying and authorizing any individual task for Medical Assistants, such as vaccine administration, since other important activities and duties may be excluded if they are not cited in legislative statutes and regulations. We strongly believe that Physicians who have had long relationships

with their assistants' training and experience, should delegate and supervise any given task and monitor pertinent results and outcomes. This can be addressed by simply stating that the ability to delegate tasks includes, but is not limited to, the administration of vaccines.

It is critical that we preserve the physicians' ability to delegate tasks to their assistants, under their guidance and legal protection, as they have for decades without singling out individual activities. This tried-and-true model has served us well and allows more flexibility and agility in responding to changing needs, while preserving patient safety and allowing the efficient delivery of health care.

Thank you for your consideration.