



**Testimony on House Bill 5241 An Act Establishing Fines for Violations of the Electronic Prescription Drug Monitoring Program
February 27, 2018**

Senator Leone, Senator Witkos, Representative D'Agostino, and members of the General Law Committee, on behalf of the physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) and the Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons (CTACS), thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony today on **House Bill 5241 An Act Establishing Fines for Violations of the Electronic Prescription Drug Monitoring Program**.

CSMS has been actively involved throughout the history of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). CSMS is proud of its efforts working in conjunction with the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) and members of the General Assembly to originally obtain a federal grant for the development of the PDMP. In addition to actively supporting original state efforts in obtaining a Federal grant to establish the program, CSMS physicians were part of the original PMP pilot program and ultimately encouraged and supported the State's decision to maintain the program when the grant ended. CSMS has educated members on us of the PDMP and promoted its use regularly through various newsletters, web postings and other communications. In addition, CSMS was pleased to work with the General Assembly and DCP once again in 2013 to support the requirement that all prescribers register for its use when seeking or renewing their state license to prescribe. Subsequently, CSMS worked with DCP and members of the Administration and legislature to enact legislation facilitating its use and increasing compliance by granting prescribers the ability to delegate the task of checking to PDMP to an appropriate representative. In addition, we have attached to this testimony information regarding aggressive CSMS activities to address the opioid crisis gripping our state.

Efforts to require use of the PDMP have been successful. Through the efforts of DCP and organizations such as CSMS, as well as the associated strong relationship with the Department, not only has compliance and use become the norm, but we have seen a significant reduction in the number of controlled substances prescribed such as opioids.

HB 5241 establishes fines for violations of the PDMP. CSMS opposes this legislation. Collaborative efforts, including the involvement of the legislature, have been working without the potential for fines. Currently, DCP can focus its limited resources on implementation and compliance rather than enforcement, partnering with others for the benefit of the program. Additionally, statute currently includes a punitive measure available to DCP far greater than monetary penalties, the termination of the ability to prescribe medications. The system of fines included in HB 5241 is unnecessary and contrary to ongoing efforts to operate a vibrant and successful PDMP.