



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF **CONSUMER PROTECTION**

MICHELLE H. SEAGULL | COMMISSIONER

Testimony of Michelle Seagull Commissioner of Consumer Protection

Insurance and Real Estate Committee Public Hearing, March 5, 2020

HOUSE BILL 5018 “AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH CARE COST GROWTH IN CONNECTICUT”

Senator Lesser, Representative Scanlon and Honorable Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the Governor’s bill, H.B. 5018, An Act Concerning Health Care Cost Growth in Connecticut.

This bill would provide the tools to begin to contain the rapidly rising costs of health care in Connecticut, including growth in pharmaceutical spending, by requiring the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) to submit an application to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish a Canadian Drug Importation Program to import safe and effective legend drugs from Canada.

In 2018, the State of Vermont became the first state to pass legislation to allow for the importation of Canadian drugs. Their Agency of Human Services is poised to submit its application to HHS by July 1, 2020, and their data shows that Vermont insurers could save millions of dollars annually.

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During the last legislative session, language similar to the language being considered today passed the House. Funds were also included in DCP's budget to hire a durational project manager to write and navigate the application process. DCP has worked with the leaders of this Committee as well as the Office of the Governor on this language. We are prepared to implement this proposed legislation to ensure the imporation of safe and effective drugs into our state, and we look forward to working with the proponents throughout the rest of this legislative session.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide input about this important bill. Please contact our Legislative Director, Leslie O'Brien, if you have any questions.