

**Written Testimony of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society  
HB 5125 AAC The Provision of Immunity from Civil Liability for Entities That Have Operated  
Pursuant Health and Safety Guidelines During the Covid-19 Pandemic  
Committee on Judiciary– Monday, March 15, 2021**

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom and distinguished Members of the Committee on Judiciary, on behalf of the more than 200 orthopaedic surgeons of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of **HB 5125 AAC The Provision of Immunity from Civil Liability for Entities That Have Operated Pursuant Health and Safety Guidelines During the Covid-19 Pandemic**. The Society greatly appreciates the committee's consideration of this important bill.

Over the course of the past 12 months, we all have been challenged, pivoted, and adapted to living and working amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. If this past year has taught us anything, it is that the course of an unknown virus is highly unpredictable.

As physicians, we responded quickly and early on to the safety protocols recommended and prescribed by Connecticut's Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control. As more became understood about the transmission and contraction of the Covid-19 virus, we adapted and pivoted to ensure updated safety measures for our patients and employees were enacted to minimize the risk of contracting Covid-19 in our practices. These measures continue to evolve and are strictly adhered to in our practices. These vital precautions have allowed us to continue to provide much needed office based and surgical care for patients and allows our valuable employees to safely work onsite.

The orthopaedic community appreciates the Committees' proactive legislation to provide immunity from civil liability for our practices operating pursuant to health and safety guidelines during the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite strict adherence to state and federal safety protocols and guidelines, the known airborne transmission of the virus, makes it is very difficult to avoid possible exposure in any environment. While the advent of the vaccines has made tremendous inroads into the containment of the virus, there remains environmental and personal accountability risks to transmission.

This bill will provide immunity and fair protections to not only physician practices, but all other businesses that are adhering to known safety guidelines while providing valuable services to the public. Prohibiting liability arising from possible exposure and/or transmission in a place of business is imperative to the medical community in order to continue to provide treatment and care to patients during Covid 19, or any future public health or civil preparedness emergencies declared by the Governor of the State of Connecticut, without fear, costs, or distress of litigation.

Thank you for your leadership and we look forward to the fair and just protections the enactment of HB 5125 will extend to the physician community as a critical component to maintaining and ensuring valuable health care services during public health emergencies without the concern of possible legal action due to transmission or exposure of Covid-19.

Respectfully submitted,  
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