



**Testimony of Donna Boruchov, M.D. Pediatric Hematologist Oncologist
at Connecticut Children's Medical Center, to the Human Services Committee regarding
SB 1473, An Act Requiring Medicaid Coverage for FDA-Approved Gene Therapies to
Treat Sickle Cell Disease**

March 11, 2025

Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrest, and members of the legislature's Human Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my support for SB 1473, An Act Requiring Medicaid Coverage for FDA-Approved Gene Therapies to Treat Sickle Cell Disease.

My name is Dr. Donna Boruchov; I serve as a Pediatric Hematologist Oncologist at Connecticut Children's. Before commenting on the bill, I want to provide some background about our organization. Connecticut Children's is a nationally recognized, 205-bed not-for-profit children's health system driving innovation in pediatrics. With over 3,200 employees and more than 1,300 pediatric experts on our medical staff, we are the only health system in the state dedicated exclusively to the care of children.

The gene therapies discussed within SB 1473 are a valuable tool for treating Sickle Cell Disease, and provide a potentially curative treatment for children with this highly debilitating ailment. I have been caring for people living with sickle cell disease for over 30 years and am thrilled that research has led to curative treatments for this serious and devastating illness. In order to meet the needs of the patient population we at Connecticut Children's hope to offer this treatment at our new transplant unit in late 2026 or early 2027.

While we know the cost of this treatment is high, the cost to the health care system for continuous sickle cell treatment in other forms is very significant. It may be the case that the lifetime savings to the health care system, and specifically to the state, could be better off as a result of supporting gene therapy.

As a Pediatric Hematologist Oncologist, I wish to convey my strong support for this legislation and am thankful to have the opportunity to contribute to this process regarding SB 1473. Thank you for your consideration of our position. If you have any questions about this testimony, please contact Christian Petersen, Connecticut Children's Government Relations Manager, at cpetersen@connecticutchildrens.org.