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**Testimony of
Teresa C. Younger
Executive Director
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Before the Public Health Committee
March 19, 2014**

**Re: H.B. 460, AAC Hospital Conversions and Other Matters Affecting Hospitals
H.B. 5571, AAC Certificate of Need Requirements, Hospital Conversions and Medical
Foundations**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) regarding H.B. 460 and H.B. 5571.

These bills enhance the current certificate of need process and allows an opportunity to fully analyze a hospital's plan to eliminate patient services, including a requirement to seek a certificate of need (CON) application if inpatient or outpatient reproductive services are terminated. This provision is of significant importance because women's health services are often the first targeted for elimination.

PCSW monitors the CON process because of its impact on women's access to gender appropriate, comprehensive and preventive healthcare. In the past decade, PCSW used the CON process three times to work toward a resolution when women's health services were threatened by a proposed change in hospital practices: 2007: Hospital of Saint Raphael, New Haven; 2005: Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, New London, and; 2001: Sharon Hospital, Sharon. In each of these instances, health care services were preserved, or a compromise was made between the community and hospitals to ensure that adequate services were provided elsewhere.

In 2012, PCSW monitored the proposed hospital merger of St. Mary's Hospital and Waterbury Hospital. The hospitals proposed to merge a public hospital with a Catholic hospital and eliminate reproductive health services. If this had occurred, the only hospital in the city would not have provided reproductive health services. PCSW took the lead in negotiations with Waterbury Hospital to develop an alternate plan. Ultimately, the alternate plan of developing a Women's Pavilion to provide reproductive services failed to serve women's health needs.

Enhancing oversight to the State would ensure that adequate health services are provided in all communities, and the process is open and accessible to the public. We look forward to working with you to address this important issue. Thank you for your consideration.