

# HB 6652 – A NEW TAX ON MEDICAL PROCEDURES...

## A NEW TAX TARGETING WOMEN



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The legislative package that passed the Insurance Committee expanding insurance coverage for the uninsured includes a new and controversial tax on certain medical procedures. HB 6652 would require doctors to add a 6% sales tax to each of their medical bills if it is for a cosmetic medical procedure.

The State of New Jersey passed a 6% tax on cosmetic medical procedures in 2004, but they found that the tax has been a fiscal failure — falling short of expectations, is an administrative nightmare, and discriminates against women.

Since NJ, no other state has passed this type of tax and, in fact, seven have rejected it.

The original sponsor of the NJ bill (Joe Cryan D-NJ, Chair of the Democratic Party) has introduced legislation to repeal the cosmetic medical procedures tax.

Nearly 9 in 10 plastic surgery patients are working women. According to a 2004 study by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, 60% of those planning to have plastic surgery reported a household income between \$30,000 and \$90,000. Clearly, this proposal does not target wealthy women, but unfairly increases the cost of medical procedures.

While some have called this new medical procedures tax nothing more than a “vanity” tax on the rich for their cosmetic surgery, others have pointed out that is often difficult to distinguish between what is “cosmetic” and what is “medically necessary.” These determinations should be made by doctors, not state tax auditors.

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?

Is it medically necessary to alleviate lower back pain through breast reduction surgery, which may also improve the appearance of the patient?

Is it medically necessary to improve the physical appearance of accident and burn victims through cosmetic surgery?

Is it medically necessary to remove excess and uncomfortable skin after potentially life-saving gastric-bypass surgery?

### TAXING MEDICAL PROCEDURES IS A SLIPPERY SLOPE.

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**IT IS TIME TO REJECT THE NEW  
TAX ON COSMETIC PROCEDURES  
AND REMOVE IT FROM THE  
PROVISIONS OF HB 6652.**



The Connecticut Society of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeons, Inc.  
22 Avalon Drive · Avon, CT 06001 · Tel & Fax 860.404.0035