

My name is Henry Morris. I am pastor of the Faith Lutheran Church and Dean of Lutheran Congregations in the New Haven area. I am here to testify in favor of Raised **Bill No. 7363**, An act concerning public oversight of hospitals and hospital societies or corporations receiving substantial Medicaid funding.

This bill would go a long way to establishing accountability and transparency of Boards of Trustees at hospitals that receive large sums of taxpayers' dollars. Currently this bill would only apply to Yale-New Haven Hospital because Yale-New Haven, our state's largest and wealthiest hospital receives the lion's share of public funding.

Because of its tax-exempt status, the residents of New Haven subsidize Yale-New Haven to the tune of tens of millions of dollars a year. In addition, residents throughout the state provide \$86 million in state Medicaid funds—almost twice as much as the next Medicaid recipient, Hartford hospital.

And because Yale-New Haven is tax-exempt and receives hundreds of millions in public funds it is suppose to operate in the interests of the entire community and ought to have a board of trustees that is representative and accountable to the community it serves. However from my direct experience, this is sadly not the case.

When my parishioners and parishioners of my colleagues told us about how they were being sued by YNHH because they didn't have insurance we first went to the hospital administration. When the administration told us they did nothing wrong, we appealed to the board of trustees. They refused to meet with us. The hospital's abusive debt collection has resulted in continuing lawsuits against the hospital by the Attorney General and hundreds of patients.

When we sought to meet with the board of trustees to discuss the harassment of workers at the hospital for union activity, they refused. Only after the hospital's violations of its fair union election agreement was disclosed through an independent arbitration process has the president of the board spoken publicly, but all the decision making remains behind closed doors.

Yale-New Haven Hospital must be more accountable to the community that funds it. This bill will merely provide a reasonable level of accountability and transparency. It is unreasonable for a hand-picked, self-selected group to continue to operate without oversight and representation from the public.