



**Testimony of
Kenneth J. Robinson, MD
Medical Director, Program Director
LIFE STAR Helicopter Program**

**Concerning the CT State Grant for the Financial Support of LIFE STAR
Submitted to Human Services Subcommittee
Of the Appropriations Committee
February 18, 2009**

My name is Dr. Kenneth Robinson and I am the Medical Director and Program Director of the LIFE STAR Helicopter Program from Hartford Hospital. I am here today to testify in favor of restoring the state grant of \$1.4 million for financial support of the LIFE STAR Program in both years of the Governor's proposed budget.

LIFE STAR has been serving the citizens of Connecticut for almost 24 years. During that time we have flown approximately twenty-three thousand patients and have collaborated with every hospital in Connecticut. We transport 1100 to 1200 patients per year. In addition to rapid, critical care transport, we provide a significant amount of outreach/injury prevention education to various groups throughout our state. Last year our outreach program addressed over 22,000 participants. The LIFE STAR Program is also very productive with respect to research and contributing to the medical literature.

We are the only licensed air medical transport program in Connecticut. Nine years ago we partnered with Backus Hospital and relocated an aircraft to Norwich, CT. This was done to better serve the citizens of Connecticut by decreasing our response times to a rapidly growing area of the state.

Our rates are set annually by the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services and are based on our financial performance from the previous year. The elimination of the state's support of the LIFE STAR Program will significantly increase the costs to all payors. We accept requests for transport based solely on the patient's condition, availability of aircraft and weather. We transport patients regardless of their insurance or ability to pay. In addition, we transport patients from every hospital in Connecticut and deliver patients to the receiving hospitals in the state. This is a free service for these institutions, because we do not, in any way, bill the referring or receiving hospital. We bill the patient directly and LIFE STAR thereby accepts all of the risk of the lack of reimbursement.

Currently, the state grant to LIFE STAR serves to offset losses from operations that would be incurred in the absence of the grant. Over the last three years, with the current grant, the program has had an average annual loss of \$72,000. We are planning to replace at least one of the existing LIFE STAR helicopters because of their age and the safety technology on the new aircraft which can not be retrofitted to our existing aircraft. The replacement of an existing aircraft with a new helicopter will increase our operating expenses and will make the grant from the state even more important.

I ask you to please add the grant for financial support to the LIFE STAR Program to the State Budget for SFY 2010. Without this grant LIFE STAR will not be able to continue serving the citizens of Connecticut as we have done in the past.

**LIFE STAR OUTREACH EDUCATION
FY 06, 07, 08 AND YTD 09**

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
Safety Presentations	27	24	26
Prom Promise	9	17	22
Fire/EMS Drills	9	9	10
Static Displays	32	39	39
Helipad Tours	60	39	20
Other	7	11	12
Remote Bases	1	1	3
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Total Approx People Reached	11,220	28,835	22,452

**LIFE STAR SCENE CALLS
FY 07 AND FY 08**

AMSTON	2	GROTON	1	ROCKY HILL	2
ANDOVER	3	HADDAM	12	SALEM	4
ASHFORD	4	HADDAM NECK	1	SALISBURY	2
AVON	1	HAMPTON	4	SCOTLAND	1
BALTIC	1	HARWINTON	1	SIMSBURY CENTER	2
BARKHAMSTED	4	HEBRON	7	SOMERS	2
BERLIN	9	HIGGANUM	3	SOUTH COVENTRY	4
BLOOMFIELD	1	IVORYTON	1	SOUTH GLASTONBURY	2
BOLTON	2	KENT	8	SOUTH KENT	2
BRISTOL	12	KILLINGWORTH	4	SOUTH KILLINGLY	1
BROOKLYN	1	LAKE POCOTOPAUG	2	SOUTH WINDSOR	4
BURLINGTON	5	LEBANON	13	SOUTHINGTON	1
CANAAN	2	LITCHFIELD	1	STAFFORD	1
CANTERBURY	1	LONG HILL	1	STAFFORD SPRINGS	14
CANTON	1	MANCHESTER	4	STONINGTON	4
CENTERBROOK	1	MANSFIELD CENTER	7	STORRS	1
CENTRAL MANCHESTER	1	MARLBOROUGH	2	STORRS MANSFIELD	1
CENTRAL SOMERS	1	MERIDEN	13	SUFFIELD	1
CHAPLIN	5	MIDDLEFIELD	1	SUFFIELD DEPOT	2
CHESTER	3	MIDDLETOWN	16	TERRAMUGGUS	3
CHESTER CENTER	4	MOODUS	5	THOMPSONVILLE	1
CLINTON	4	MOOSUP	2	TOLLAND	15
COLCHESTER	8	MORRIS	2	UNION	1
COLEBROOK	1	NEW HARTFORD	16	UNIONVILLE	1
COLLINSVILLE	3	NEW LONDON	1	VERNON	1
COLUMBIA	5	NEW MILFORD	8	VERNON ROCKVILLE	4
CORNWALL BRIDGE	2	NEW PRESTON	2	VOLUNTOWN	1
COVENTRY	14	NIANTIC	1	WALLINGFORD CENTER	1
CROMWELL	5	NORFOLK	1	WARREN	1
CRYSTAL LAKE	1	NORTH FRANKLIN	1	WASHINGTON	7
DAYVILLE	1	NORTH GROSVENORDALE	1	WATERFORD	4
DEEP RIVER CENTER	3	NORTH STONINGTON	2	WEST CORNWALL	1
DURHAM	4	NORTH WINDHAM	2	WEST HARTFORD	1
EAST BERLIN	1	NORTHFIELD	1	WEST SUFFIELD	2
EAST CANAAN	1	OAKDALE	2	WESTBROOK	4
EAST GRANBY	1	OLD LYME	4	WESTERLY	1
EAST HADDAM	7	OLD MYSTIC	5	WETHERSFIELD	1
EAST HAMPTON	12	OLD SAYBROOK	3	WHITE PLAINS	1
EAST HARTFORD	1	OXFORD	1	WILBRAHAM	1
EAST HARTLAND	1	PAWCATUCK	2	WILLIMANTIC	4
EAST WINDSOR	1	PLAINFIELD	1	WILLINGTON	4
EASTFORD	1	PLAINFIELD VILLAGE	1	WINDHAM	1
ELLINGTON	7	PLAINVILLE	2	WINDSOR LOCKS	2
ENFIELD	1	PLANTSVILLE	3	WINSTED	8
ESSEX VILLAGE	1	PLYMOUTH	2	WOODSTOCK	1
FALLS VILLAGE	1	POMFRET CENTER	1	WORTHINGTON	1
FARMINGTON	7	PORTLAND	10		
GAYLORDSVILLE	3	PUTNAM	2		
GLASTONBURY	6	RIVERTON	1		
GOSHEN	3	ROCKFALL	1		