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Testimony Before Higher Education and employment Advancement Committee HB 6335 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH CENTER FACILITIES PLAN

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Senator Handley, Representative Willis and Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, my name is A. Bates Lyons and I reside in Torrington, Connecticut. I am here today not as a physician, employee, or even a caregiver of the Health Center. I am here as a long-term patient of the medical services provided by the Health Center. I speak in favor of HB 6335.

I have been receiving medical services from the competent physicians of the Health Center since the early 80's. I continue receiving these services for I find their medial expertise to be outstanding. But at this time, I'd rather concentrate my time before you on the subject at hand, the Integrated Academic Health Center addressed in HB 6335.

The partnership of the UConn Medical Center and Hartford Hospital will allow for the universal medical care numerously discussed in government circles today. From my layperson viewpoint, as a receiver of medical care, I can see the benefits of this merger. For example, should I, and I have in the past, need admittance into a local hospital on an emergency basis, the physicians at that facility spend the first moments of my care accessing my medical emergency without the benefits of having my medical history. Due to easy access of sharing patient records, this integration of patient care will prevent this costly and time-consuming activity. In addition, it will enhance the medical care provided as well as other benefits I which I have yet to address, but will be willing to explore at a later time.

I will not attempt to address the financial issues facing the Health Center, because I'm not privy to that information. Besides I have enough budget issues on my plate at the present moment in my role as Vice Chairman of the Board of Education in my city of Torrington. So I'll leave that subject to the Health Center experts. Though I will say that I do have a foundation of financial knowledge, which I obtained in my 10-year employment with the State of Connecticut as Under Secretary to the Office of Policy and Management. Therefore affording me the ability to see financial opportunities with this merger. But again, I'll leave that discussion with the experts from the Medical Center.

In closing, I'd like to say that the benefits of the merger with Hartford Hospital and UConn Health Center can only provide for the citizens of this state enhanced care-giving services while being fiscally responsible. That's a goal we all should aim to accomplish.

I realize that these are tough economic times and that facing new and innovative issues are difficult decisions to make. I'll leave you with these thoughts: 'Not everything we face can be changed, But nothing can be changed unless it is faced'. Through 'out of the box' thinking, one has to take the crisis of today and turn them into opportunities for tomorrow. HB 6335 is an opportunity for tomorrow. Thank you for this opportunity to speak in favor and support of the UConn Health Center. I ask for your support of HB 6335.