

Madam chair, madam chair and distinguished committee members, my name is Joseph Dell'Orfano. I am a physician and taxpayer residing in Middlefield, CT. I oppose S.B. 800, AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING THE FRINGE BENEFIT DIFFERENTIAL FOR EMPLOYEES OF JOHN DEMPSEY HOSPITAL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH CENTER.

I graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Medicine in 1991 and I completed a residency in Internal Medicine at UConn. I served as a UConn Chief Medical Resident in 1994 and was stationed at St. Francis Hospital. The strength of my training was the result of the strong partnerships between the Uconn School of Medicine and all of the community hospitals. I am a Cardiac Electrophysiologist in private practice with a faculty appointment at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and staff privileges at St. Francis, Middlesex, the Hospital of Central Connecticut at New Britain, ECHN and the John Dempsey Hospital. Our practice remains actively involved in the University's training programs and has received the teaching award for the Cardiology fellowship program for the past two years.

The March 2008 CASE study concluded that the current relationships between the UConn Health Center and its regional clinical care partners are inadequate to fully achieve excellence in medical education. Based on unproven assumptions that the medical school's survival depends upon its ownership of a hospital, the 2009 Independent Monitor Report endorsed a partnership between the UConn Health Center and Hartford Healthcare Corporation, which provides for the construction of a replacement hospital on the Health Center Campus requiring the State to provide \$475 million for construction of this replacement hospital and to provide \$13 million dollars per year to cover the fringe benefits differential, which is provided for in S.B. 800.

This proposal awards Hartford Healthcare Corporation a brand new hospital paid for with public funds. If S.B. 800 is passed, the State will provide continuous support for personnel costs, again with taxpayer dollars. In addition, the partnership allows Hartford and John Dempsey Hospitals to change their names to "University Hospital," promoting an idea that these two institutions are now suddenly the education, research, and patient care pillars of Connecticut. This perception will create an unfair and unearned competitive advantage to the newly dubbed "University Hospital" at the expense of their competitors.

The UConn School Of Medicine has thrived on its strong collaborations with all of the regional community teaching hospitals. I am a product of the UConn School of Medicine and the UConn Internal Medicine Residency program. I received high quality medical education and training because of my clinical rotations through all of our busy community hospitals. Funding the proposed merger between only two of these institutions, Hartford Healthcare Corporation and UConn Health Center with S.B. 800 allows for a taxpayer subsidized state sponsored unfair competitive advantage to one private hospital corporation at the expense of the other regional hospitals. I believe this will reduce the quality of medical care in our region and degrade our current medical education and training program. For these reasons, I oppose S.B. 800.