

Testimony

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

March 15, 2010

**HB5027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
HEALTH CENTER'S FACILITIES PLAN**

Senator Handley, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, my name is Adam Silverman and I am a resident of Simsbury. I am here today to speak in support of **HB5027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH CENTER'S FACILITIES PLAN**

I am a physician at the UConn Health Center and am approaching my ninth anniversary at the institution. As Chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine and President of the John Dempsey Hospital medical and dental staff, I want to thank you for your ongoing support of our mission. I have come before this committee several times in the past to testify on behalf of the health center and it is a privilege to do so again. I am here today to speak in favor of Governor Rell's proposed rejuvenation of the UConn Health Center and development of the UConn Health Network.

I do not need to recount for you the trials and tribulations that have necessitated many of these types of hearings in the past. You know them well! What I would like to do is provide you with a vision of what *can be* in the wake of Governor Rell's proposal last week. On March 9th we witnessed a truly momentous occasion at the Health Center. Legislators, University leadership, faculty, staff, students, and doctors stood with the leaders of all of our region's hospitals to launch a new vision for the care of patients in our region. This initiative, the UConn Health Network is a bold vision that will allow us to re-cast the landscape and deliver superior healthcare, open new paths of inquiry, advance the scientific understanding of disease, and provide job opportunities; all for the benefit of Connecticut's citizens.

The core of this proposal has been and always will be a vibrant Academic Health Center; that rare nexus where research, education, and patient care intersect resulting in critical mass and a chain reaction causing an explosion of new knowledge, new doctors/dentists/scientists, and cutting edge clinical care. Without integrating each piece of the Academic Health Center, critical mass is never generated and the immense benefit to society is never fully realized. A rejuvenated UConn Health Center including John Dempsey Hospital is an essential component to the success of the State's only public

Academic Health Center. A state-of-the-art hospital will not only provide exceptional patient care, but will serve as a classroom for the next generation of physicians, as well as catalyst for the next generation of scientific inquiry by giving the physician-scientist a physical structure adjacent to their research lab with which to translate their scientific findings into meaningful treatments for their patients.

This translation of knowledge to practice is the holy grail of medicine. Speeding new treatments, new techniques, and new process from the lab to the patient is what we devote our lives to. Some of you have walked our halls and noted the proximity of research lab to classroom, to patient care area. Not only is this arrangement awe-inspiring, it is also a critical recruitment tool for physicians, dentists, researchers, and students. As such, a rejuvenated John Dempsey Hospital will become the centerpiece of the State's majestic "Health Center on the Hill", attracting talent not just locally but nationally and ensuring the flow of Connecticut's the best and brightest students through our halls.

Faced with a growing shortage of physicians in the State, this investment in the UConn Health Center will offer our state a unique recruiting advantage over our neighbors and will become the centerpiece of a larger plan to recruit and retain physicians to our state. For these reasons, I hope that you will support HB5027. Thank you!