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Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

The State's leading force for women's equality

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**Testimony of
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Before the
Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
Monday, March 15, 2010**

In Support of: H.B. No. 5027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH CENTER'S FACILITIES PLAN.

Senator Mary Ann Handley and Representative Roberta Willis and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony in support of H.B. No. 5027 AAC The University of Connecticut Health Center's Facilities Plan.

PCSW chairs and convenes the Connecticut Women's Health Advisory Council (CWHC), which is a broad coalition of groups who have been committed to and working for the health and well-being of Connecticut women and girls over their life span. The mission of the CWHC is to achieve access to health care for all women and girls in Connecticut; to advance the representation of women at all levels of decision-making, research and service delivery; to promote awareness of women and girls' health care needs; and to educate the public, especially state policymakers, about these needs.

We support H.B. 5027 that would require a study of issues concerning The University of Connecticut Health Center's facilities plan. PCSW and CWHC understands that the ongoing financial challenges being felt by the University of Connecticut Health Center and John Dempsey Hospital requires a reflection of the most feasible ways to capitalize on the uniqueness of this facility. As the State's only public teaching hospital, the services and research provided are critical to the women in a variety of ways. By providing employment to more than 5000 employees they ensure women in the state have career opportunities in the science, technology, and engineering and science fields. As a teaching facility they ensure women's mental health, reproductive and HIV/AIDS services are constantly being addressed. Through their research they ensure that gender research, so lacking in the research areas, are explored.

The PCSW and CWHC believe that health care for women needs to be gender appropriate, culturally competent, comprehensive and preventive, universal and confidential. We also believe that Connecticut serves its residents best by having a public teaching and research facility that can be the cornerstone to economic growth and provide cutting edge services to 51% of the State's population.