



705 North Mountain Road  
Newington, CT 06111-1411

Phone: 860-953-2626  
Fax: 860-953-1978

[www.cpfu.org](http://www.cpfu.org)

March 15, 2010

Good afternoon Senator Handley, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. My name is William J. Boucher, and I am the President of the Connecticut Police & Fire Union. With me is Captain Greg Priest of the University of Connecticut Health Center Fire Department. We are here today to speak on Raised Bills No. 5027: An Act Concerning the University of Connecticut Health Center's Facilities Plan.

The Connecticut Police and Fire Union is a labor union that represents approx. 1,000 police officers, firefighters and other public safety professionals who are employed by the State of Connecticut. The membership includes 42 police officers, firefighters/paramedics and EMTs employed at the University of Connecticut Health Center.

We are here today to support the idea behind the proposed bill. While I applaud all the hard work and effort that has gone on the past year to come up with a solution to many of the problems at the Health Center, I have concerns about Connecticut Children's Medical Center (CCMC) assuming the license and operation of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) program and the effect that will have on the response and transportation of the of the infants needing its specialized care and services. While I agree that establishing a regional neonatal intensive care unit program will create efficiencies that benefit the entire State and improve accessibility, efficiency and continuity of care, I am concerned has to how the first critical step in the process – the response and transportation of the infant will be carried out.

Currently the highly trained paramedics and EMT's employed at the UConn Health Center serve as the first responders and transporters for the NICU patients. They have been performing this service for approx. 35 years. For the past four years they have conducted an average of 330 transports per year. As a matter of fact, the UConn Health Center has the only licensed neonatal transport unit in the State. They even respond to calls in western Massachusetts and have transported infants as far as Boston and New Hampshire.

My concern is whether CCMC will continue to utilize these highly skill professionals as the first responders/transporters, or seek to used a less costly, less trained, inexperienced service provider, that potentially jeopardizes that lives of an innocent infants, in an attempt to save money.

This kind of service, that the UConn Health Center and Dempsey Hospital currently provides, is the type of issue that need to be looked at and discussed, when making a decision on the future of the Health Center, not just the bottom line.

I would like to close by thanking the members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee for their attention to this important issue, and we would be happy to answer any questions and provide you with any further information you may require.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. J. Boucher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and "J".

William J. Boucher,  
President