



Joan McDonald  
Commissioner



State of Connecticut  
Department of Economic and  
Community Development

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION AND  
EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE**  
*March 15, 2010*

*Joan McDonald, Commissioner  
Department of Economic and Community Development  
Chair, Connecticut Innovations  
Member UConn Board of Trustees*

**HB 5027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH  
CENTER'S FACILITIES PLAN.**

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The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and Connecticut Innovations (CI) offer the following comments in **strong support** of HB 5027, AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH CENTER'S FACILITIES PLAN.

Connecticut, much like the rest of the nation, is facing uncertain economic times and we are faced with many fiscal decisions that will have a lasting impact on the state for many years to come. However, despite this uncertainty, there are also many opportunities for Connecticut to make intelligent investments targeted to job creation.

The bill before you today represents just such an investment. Governor Rell has proposed a \$352 million job creating investment in the University of Connecticut Health Center. As a part of the state's Flagship University, the UConn Health Center is already a nationally recognized leader in dentistry and has many of the nation's brightest and dedicated healthcare professionals and researchers. As such, this state asset must be nurtured and grown, since it will not only assist the state in climbing out of the current recession, but will help the state maintain and grow a competitive edge in the bioscience and medical technology industry, which we have always regarded as an important job growth sector.

This investment in a new hospital will allow for an increase in class sizes in the medical and dental schools and will help offset the existing workforce shortages in these professions. This proposal also establishes a landmark partnership between academia and the healthcare industry by establishing the UConn Health Network. By doing so, the state is also making an investment in our existing private sector health care industry and workforce. The key to the success of this Network, however, is at its core, the need for a vibrant and robust Health Center. These proposals are inextricably linked.

It is projected that as a result of this investment, more than 5,000 new jobs will be created by 2020 and more than 6800 by 2030 across the new UConn Health Network, not including associated jobs in the private sector.

Additionally, the state's return on investment will generate an estimated:

- \$1.5 billion annually in new personal income in 2040 (nominal dollars);
- \$1 billion annually in new output (2000 constant dollars) Gross Domestic State Product; and
- \$1.1 billion in new tax revenue for the state by 2040.

Under Governor Rell's proposal, HB 5027 will also establish a bioscience enterprise zone. This will allow DECD to offer incentives to bioscience and medical companies that create jobs and work with UConn Health Network partners to further grow this industry in the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments. We urge the committee to take **favorable action** on HB 5027.