TESTIMONY OF
BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL
BEFORE THE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Friday, March 4, 2011

HB 6380, AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2013

Bridgeport Hospital appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 6380, AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2013.**

Bridgeport Hospital is a 425-bed, full service, acute care teaching hospital that provides high-quality care to all our patients. In addition to over 60 sub-specialties, Bridgeport hospital houses the only specialized burn care facility between New York and Boston, and is also the site of southern Connecticut's only multi-person Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy chamber, which aids in the treatment of stubborn wounds. Additionally, Bridgeport Hospital continues to be a safety net for our community by providing healthcare to our patients regardless of their ability to pay.

HB 6380 provides the details for implementing the proposed state budget. I am here to ask you to oppose this bill because it cuts $83 million in funding from the Uncompensated Care and DSH pools, imposes a 5.5 percent tax on hospitals, and makes a number of other reductions and changes to the Medicaid program that will negatively affect Bridgeport Hospital and the community and patients we serve.

More specifically, if passed as proposed, **Bridgeport Hospital will lose an additional $1.37 million due to implementation of the hospital tax and elimination of the hospital pools.** This will make it difficult for us to continue to provide the high-quality care our patients expect, hire physician experts and adequately train our medical residents. In addition, the loss of these funds will cause to defer or delay capital spending. We understand that the state is facing an unprecedented budget deficit and balancing needs and resources will be difficult. However, we must be mindful that imposing a hospital tax or eliminating funding for uncompensated care will hurt the health of Connecticut citizens and the economy of our state.

In addition to the loss from the tax and the elimination of funding for uncompensated care, Bridgeport Hospital will also be harmed by proposals that would cut $1.1 million in funding for certain hospital outpatient services, reduce non-emergency dental services for adults under Medicaid, and impose cost sharing requirements for certain individuals receiving Medicaid services.

This is not the time to dismantle the healthcare system. There are better options that provide the opportunity for expanding access, reducing the state deficit, reducing the cost shift to Connecticut businesses and employees, and helping address the hospital funding shortfall.

We urge you to oppose HB 6380, and we thank you for your consideration of this important matter.