



**TESTIMONY OF
Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center
BEFORE THE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
Friday, March 4, 2011**

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

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

Saint Francis is a 617 bed general acute care hospital located in Hartford, Connecticut. Saint Francis is a tertiary teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. It is the largest Catholic hospital in New England and the third largest hospital in Connecticut. In FY2010 Saint Francis provided care to over 32,000 inpatients, 200,000 outpatients and treated over 69,000 people in its emergency department. Saint Francis provided the Greater Hartford community with over 83 million dollars of unreimbursed healthcare services in FY2010 (including bad debt). Over 64 million dollars of the 83 million dollar total was for services identified as community benefits.

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 my hospital and the community and patients we serve. In fact, these budget actions directly threaten our hospital's ability to serve our community.

If the budget proposed in HB 6380 is passed as proposed, Saint Francis would lose over \$3.7 million in the next fiscal year.

The consequences of losing \$2.7 million per year are severe.

Saint Francis would be forced to curtail necessary physician recruitment and delay several necessary renovation projects.

In addition, Saint Francis would have to postpone planned service enhancements and reduce the number of personnel hired in the coming year.

Saint Francis understands that Governor Malloy is facing an unprecedented state budget deficit and has the tough job of balancing needs and resources. We are all very familiar with the difficult choices he must make. However, we know that imposing a hospital tax or eliminating funding for uncompensated care will hurt the health of Connecticut citizens and the economy of our state.

Often we only think about hospitals and the care they provide. But, cuts of this magnitude will ripple through the economy at both the local and state levels. Saint Francis is one of the largest employers in the Greater Hartford Region. We employ over 5,000 people from our surrounding communities and pay over \$302.2 million in salaries each year.

On top of this loss from the tax and the elimination of funding for uncompensated care, Saint Francis 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.

Saint Francis offers a wide range of outpatient dental services for the poor in the Burgdorf/Bank of America Health Center and the Saint Francis Gengras Clinics. While heavily utilized these are some of the specific services targeted for cuts in the Governor's budget.

Reducing funding to these programs will deny good dental health to a large number of Connecticut's most vulnerable citizens.

We believe there are better ways to address the budget crisis than the approach proposed in this portion of the Governor's budget. Instead of emphasizing the sharing of "universal pain" we urge the Connecticut General Assembly to craft budget proposals that "maximize the protection" of basic human health services while responding to the current fiscal challenges in a constructive fashion.

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 join us in saying NO to hospital taxes and funding cuts.