Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Informational Hearing

Testimony

By

Interim President Philip E. Austin
University of Connecticut

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Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. We welcome the chance to update you on the UCONN 2000 program.

As you know, the UCONN 2000 program has transformed the University of Connecticut. We have you to thank for the remarkable movement of the University to its current position as one of the nation's strongest, most accessible, and most attractive public research universities. UCONN 2000 has enabled us to build or significantly renovate scores of facilities, and through these capital improvements, together we have created a statewide campus with award-winning architecture and physical improvements that are a source of pride for the people of Connecticut

The data make clear UCONN 2000's role in our transformation. We now enroll more well-prepared and diverse students than at any time in our history. Competition for admission has driven our average freshman SAT score over the 1221 mark, 108 points higher than when the UCONN 2000 program began in 1995. Today, 25% of our freshman class members are from minority groups, a 172% increase from 1995. For over a decade—not coincidentally, beginning with the period in which UCONN 2000 investments first became visible realities—the University of Connecticut has been the highest ranked public university in New England and one of the nation's top public research universities.

Thanks to you and your support and the taxpayers' investment, Connecticut has a flagship public research university worthy of our state. And the scope of the project is truly extraordinary. As of October 2010:

- 105 projects totaling $1.763 billion have been authorized;

- $1.505 billion in construction-related contracts have been issued, with
    - 80% of funds to Connecticut contractors; and
    - 21% of funds to set-aside contractors;

- In excess of 10 million square feet of new and renovated space has been completed;

- We have a full-service building and fire inspection office with state certified inspectors who inspect all UCONN 2000 construction in partnership with the State Building Inspector and State Fire Marshall's Office;

- The last five independent audits of the UCONN 2000 program showed a clean bill of health for all projects that were started since the program was overhauled;

- Bond Credit Ratings by Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's remain consistently strong; and

- An Internal Revenue Service audit of a UCONN 2000 bond issue completed in March of 2010 gave us a clean bill of health

Thanks to the vision of UCONN 2000, Connecticut takes great pride in being a national leader in higher education infrastructure. That said, you and I both know that much work still remains to ensure that the University can meet and expand programs that align directly with our state's professional workforce needs. Despite our vast progress, the work not yet done includes buildings that will provide either sorely needed classrooms or engineering, life/physical science, math, psychology, or agriculture facilities that will support critical teaching or research environments for our students and faculty. The University is currently in Phase III of the UCONN 2000 and I would like to share with you a brief overview of some of the major projects designed to meet these needs.

Storrs Campus

Arjona and Monteith (New Classroom Buildings)

These two original classroom buildings are perhaps the most visible on campus and were constructed in 1959, during the administration of Governor Ribicoff. Each has 68,600 square feet of space on four levels. Connected to the Monteith building is the 4,000 square foot Schenker Lecture Hall. These two buildings are the most heavily used classroom facilities on the Storrs campus and virtually every student, regardless of major, takes classes here to satisfy general education requirements. They also contain offices for some of the departments within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It was anticipated within the UCONN 2000 program that these buildings would be renovated. However, the cost far exceeded planned allocations and the University could not take critically important existing classroom space off-line. The project instead includes the construction of two new classroom buildings.

The West building, on the site of the former Pharmacy Building, will consist primarily of classrooms and auditoria. The East building, on the site of the former UConn Co-op, will contain departmental classrooms and offices. Construction of the West building is approximately 64% complete with an anticipated opening in summer 2011. Underground utilities, including relocation of a steam line and reconfiguration of Fairfield Way, were completed in October 2010. The East Building has been successfully bid and construction started in September 2010. Construction is approximately 7% complete and occupancy is anticipated in fall 2012.

Fine Arts Phase II

The fine and performing arts at UConn are important not just to our students but to the wider community. The building complex that houses the three academic departments comprising the School of Fine Arts has experienced significant deterioration in its interior finishes, exterior envelope and mechanical and electrical systems. The recently completed master plan identified various upgrades necessary to improve the overall condition of the building to meet its programmatic needs. The University has commenced a series of projects to improve ventilation in the photography labs, repair exterior masonry and roofing and resolve drainage issues. Other projects include replacement of exterior glazing, acoustical upgrades, replacement of cooling and mechanical systems, and accessibility to all portions of the complex. This project will be constructed in a phased fashion to lessen the impact on program activities. Design and construction activities are ongoing.

Engineering Building

Currently, the School of Engineering is located in several buildings, five on the main Storrs campus and four at the Depot Campus. Three of the oldest buildings on the main campus were built between 1959 and 1987 and can no longer support emerging interdisciplinary engineering programs such as bioengineering and nanotechnology within their building structures. Ongoing deferred maintenance projects in these buildings include code upgrades, mechanical improvements, roof and envelope repairs and interior renovations. An architectural team has been retained to conduct a planning study to identify program components for a new building to support biomedical engineering and other emerging disciplines as well as a new technology center to serve the entire campus. Construction could begin during FY13.

Gant Building Renovations (Material Science/Physics/Math Facility)

This complex, which includes the Institute of Materials Science, Physics, Math and Information Technology departments, was completed in the early 1970's and provides a total of 238,000 square feet of offices, research labs, classrooms and computer facilities. A major renovation of the space is required to address the physical deterioration caused by the building's age, and to update the facility to better meet program needs. This would include repair of the building envelope (roofs, windows and masonry), installation of fire suppression systems, and upgrades to the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. An architecture and engineering team has been selected and the planning work is underway with construction to take place over several fiscal years, beginning in late FY12 or early FY13. The University intends to undertake this project in several phases to minimize impact on the building occupants. A new fire alarm was installed throughout the complex and roof replacement and parapet repairs to the Math Science wing was completed within the last year.

Psychology Building Renovation/Addition

The Weston A. Bousfield Psychology Building contains 87,000 square feet and was constructed in 1974. Its three levels contain offices, classrooms, research laboratories and animal care

facilities. Previously, in the UCONN 2000 program, the animal care facilities were renovated and roofs and plazas re-built. Psychology is one of our most heavily enrolled majors and one of our most prestigious departments. The programs there are in increasingly high demand, with expanded enrollment and rapidly increasing research activity. A 30,000 square foot addition and selected renovations to the building are essential. A team of architects and engineers has completed design and construction document phase is about to proceed. Construction is scheduled to start upon completion of the East Building in late FY12.

Storrs Hall Addition (School of Nursing)

I do not need to tell you of the importance of the nursing profession to Connecticut's well-being, and the impending shortage of nurses is a major State concern. The need for appropriate facilities in that field is truly compelling Our School of Nursing is housed in the 35,000 square foot Storrs Hall completed in circa 1908—when Theodore Roosevelt was President-- and a 4,000 square foot modular building. Earlier in the UCONN 2000 program, Storrs Hall underwent some renovation. This project provides for a 15,000 square foot addition to Storrs Hall to accommodate offices, classrooms, and clinical simulation laboratories, as well as building envelope repairs and renovations for faculty offices in Storrs Hall. The project has been released for bidding with an anticipated construction start in spring 2011.

Torrey Life Science Renovation & Completion & Biology Expansion

The 148,000 square foot George Safford Torrey Life Sciences Building, constructed in 1961, is home to several biology departments within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It provides teaching and research space for various biology disciplines. A modest addition to the building is planned which will provide state of the art research laboratories coupled with a renovation of the existing building to upgrade teaching facilities. The University intends to implement the new addition and renovation in a phased construction project in order to minimize its impact on the existing occupants. Construction is scheduled to start in FY15.

Young Building Renovation/Addition (College of Agriculture)

This building was constructed in 1953 and has 71,937 square feet of office, classroom and lab spaces. This building serves as home to the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Due to the existing condition of its labs and the generally poor condition of all its systems, the building was slated for a full renovation and an addition should space needs require. The renovation work is the first order of business, with the project scope including replacement of windows, repointing of masonry, restroom renovations, and upgrading of mechanical systems (including laboratory ventilation). An architecture and engineering team completed building assessment and is in the process of developing design drawings. Construction is anticipated to start in FY12.

UConn Health Center (UCHC)

Research Tower (Cell & Genome Sciences Building, 400 Farmington Avenue)

This project provided for the acquisition of an existing research laboratory building at 400 Farmington Avenue and extensive renovation of approximately 117,000 gross square feet to provide wet labs for research, research support space, and incubator space. The newly renovated lab research space will be utilized to support the Health Center's current stem cell research activity including grants received under the State of Connecticut's $100 million stem cell initiative.

This project is now complete and the user groups moved into the building in July 2010. The project is anticipated to receive Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Silver status.

UCHC New Construction and Renovation

Pursuant to Public Act 10-104 the UCHC New Construction and Renovation project includes the planning, design, construction, furnishing, equipping and completion of a new bed tower for the John Dempsey Hospital and renovations to existing space. The bed tower will include 165-169 new patient rooms resulting in an increase in total licensed beds not to exceed two hundred thirty-four (234). Also included in the new construction is a 10-12 room operating room suite and additional Emergency Department space. Renovations are anticipated to include the existing Emergency Department, Dental Clinics, Cardiology, Psychiatry, and other ancillary programs such as radiology, pharmacy and lab services.

Programming and Master Planning for the project began in October 2010 and this phase of the planning will be complete in February 2011. Schematic Design will begin in the spring of 2011and full design is anticipated to be complete in 2012.

Main Building Renovation

The Health Center's enormous main building includes areas used by the general public as well as research, academic and clinical space. This renovation's primary focus is the research facility (the "L" building). The 518,145 square foot research laboratory was built in the late 60's to provide laboratory and support areas for ongoing research programs. The facility consists of seven floors, which house over 200 research labs and support space, and five floors of mixed use that include classrooms, student support spaces, operations support and mechanical spaces. Over the life of the building no substantial renovations or upgrades have been undertaken.

The L Building Renovation design work is in progress and is approximately 50% complete. Full design will be complete in December 2011. The project will renovate approximately 151,440 SF of space on the research floors in the building (approximately 54% of the space on the research floors). The project will be implemented in three phases with Phase 1A (56,340 SF) scheduled for completion in 2013. Phase 1B (42,255 SF) and Phase 2A (52,845 sf) will be completed in 2015/2016. The project will provide for modernized "open" research labs creating more efficient

and flexible working areas for the UCHC research activities. A portion of the buildings outdated mechanical infrastructure will be replaced as part of this project.

CLAC Renovation Biosafety Level 3 Lab

The Health Center's Center for Laboratory Animal Care (CLAC), has been renamed the "Center for Comparative Medicine" (CCM). This project is focused on renovations to the vivarium facilities ("B" Building) that support the UCHC research enterprise. The project will replace the outdated mechanical infrastructure and provide renovations to the program space in the B Building. Planning does not include provisions for a Biosafety level 3 lab because the UCHC programs no longer require this type of space.

The project design is approximately 30 % complete and full design will be complete in December 2011. The project construction is deferred until FY14 to allow for other priority projects to proceed.

Dental School Renovation

The School of Dental Medicine has facilities in the "C", "L" and "A" Buildings totaling 103,118 square feet. Prior to UCONN 2000 most of these areas remained the same as when they were originally constructed in 1975. In need of major renovations to bring the facilities in line with current code and accreditation standards, it is extremely important that we have up-to-date facilities and equipment to properly train our students in the most modern dental techniques utilizing equipment that is appropriate for private practice, keeping in mind that the Health Center is the primary provider of new dentists for the entire State of Connecticut. The project will not renovate the Dental School space in total; however, significant renovations to the Schools' highest priority areas have been or will be completed.

Phase 1 of the project was completed in November 2010. The renovations of 4,500 SF for the Dental Pre-Clinical Lab and the Prosthetics Lab provide new space for critical teaching functions. The renovated space provides a learning environment with the very latest technologies and equipment including an integrated simulation lab with 48 student workstations.

Conclusion

All of these projects will contribute significantly to expanding the University's ability to prepare Connecticut's future scientists, engineers, nurses, psychologists, doctors, dentists and other key professionals. These new and renovated facilities will also help the University attract and retain faculty and increase federal grants beyond our current annual level of $233 million. Increasing federal grants has a direct correlation to new discoveries and job creation, and we look forward to continuing to use UCONN 2000 to leverage additional federal funds and provide other economic benefits. In the past 12 years, for example, UConn faculty have been responsible for 226 patents, starting 35 companies, and 97 active technology licenses.

UCONN 2000 represents one of our State's greatest successes. The state's investment has

produced tangible, quantifiable returns. The program is achieving all of its stated goals: our enrollment, the quality of our student body, student diversity, and degrees awarded are all at record levels; private investment has tripled; and quality campus facilities now exist in which to learn, instruct and conduct research. In addition, the campus construction work contributes directly to the state's economy while it enhances the University's significant contributions to the economic health of Connecticut. The program is more than an investment in facilities. It is an investment in Connecticut's human resource, our students, and thus in the future of our State.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide you with this update today and for your long-term support of the University of Connecticut. We are happy to answer whatever questions you may have.