



## Trinity College

HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Senators Cassano, Fasano and Coleman, Representatives Gentile, Grogins and Aman and distinguished members of the Planning & Development Committee. My name is James F. Jones, Jr., and I am President of Trinity College. I apologize for not being able to join you today to testify in person as I am currently hosting the College's Board of Trustees on campus for our quarterly meeting.

I am providing written testimony to express my deep reservations about H.B. No. 6107 An ACT MODIFYING CERTAIN STATE GRANTS IN LIEU OF TAXES AND AUTHORIZING THE ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY OWNED BY UNIVERSITIES AND HOSPITALS. This proposed legislation would allow municipalities through a vote of their legislative body to subject the real property of any private nonprofit institution of higher learning, nonprofit general hospital facility, or free standing chronic disease hospital or urgent care facility to taxation.

We respect and understand that Hartford's ability to raise revenue to fund city services is diminished because of the number of tax-exempt organizations that are located in the city. The state has a useful tool for mitigating this fact through the use of PILOT, and we appreciate the support that the state has provided in allowing us to be a critical partner to the city. This proposal would have a profound detrimental impact on our institution because of the financial resources that would have to be dedicated to paying property taxes for our real property. Our campus covers 100 acres and hosts almost 100 facilities. The proposed sharing of PILOT funds would do little to cover the taxable value of our campus grounds and buildings.

We do not exist in the city of Hartford without recognizing the responsibility we have to the city and to our neighborhood. While we remain tax exempt we contribute greatly to the vibrancy and economic health of the city in myriad ways. The College is a founding member of Southside Institutions Neighborhoods Alliance (SINA) which is now in its 32nd year of existence. SINA works to improve the economic, physical, and social well-being of Hartford neighborhoods, and annually we commit approximately \$200,000 to assist in carrying out the important work they do. The College actively supports the Trinity College Boys and Girls Club, the first campus-related Boys and Girls Club in the United States. The College's support includes a direct operating subsidy of nearly \$30,000 as well as summer internships and school-year mentoring by Trinity students. For 13 years the College has hosted Dream Camp during the summer which is a service we provide to the families of 250 Hartford children free of charge. Dream Camp provides recreational and academic activities, and our commitment to this is more than \$600,000 annually. Trinity's Trinfo.Cafe, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in November 2010, is an internet café that provides access to technology and serves about 7,500 residents and averages 25,000 visits a year. It is open six days a week, 50 weeks a year, and is staffed by Trinity students and staff. The College's investment in Trinfo.Cafe is more than \$170,000 annually.

With an annual operating budget of approximately \$112 million, excluding capital expenditures, Trinity has an economic impact in Greater Hartford of between \$300 and \$400 million each year. Our workforce consists of 805 employees, and in the current fiscal year the College's payroll is expected to total \$59 million. I offer you this information to inform you of the commitment we have to the City of Hartford and its residents and to make you aware that we would have to re-evaluate our financial contributions to the activities mentioned earlier and many others if we were required to start paying tax on our property. This would be an unfortunate reality that we would have to carefully consider as an entity which finances its operations through tuition that is charged to our students and from income generated from the performance of our endowment which is still recovering from the impact of this recent recession. We remain committed to the city, the region, and the state, and we hope you will consider our concerns as you work to make all Connecticut communities a better place to work, play, and live.

Thank you.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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