

TESTIMONY OF
Bridgeport Hospital
SUBMITTED TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
February 17, 2012

**HB 5014, AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES FOR
THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2013**

On behalf of Bridgeport Hospital, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5014, AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 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.

We understand well how difficult it is to operate in this economic environment and make choices among competing priorities, particularly as we plan for the implementation of federal health care reform which will reduce payments to us for the services we provide. While we thank Governor Malloy for submitting a budget that maintains hospital Medicaid rates, we have concerns over the Governor's proposal which we believe will reduce access and increase uncompensated care.

Specifically, Bridgeport Hospitals opposes the provision that will:

Reduce Medicaid Low-Income Adult (LIA) enrollment by seeking a waiver to establish a \$25,000 asset limit (excluding an automobile or home); count family income when determining eligibility for individuals under the age of 26 and either living with their parents or claimed as a dependent for tax purposes; and impose limits on certain medical services.

We share your view in cautioning DSS Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby, that the Medicaid LIA population is among our most vulnerable, and modifications of the program would cause significant disruptions and loss of benefits. As a safety net, Bridgeport Hospital will continue to provide care for all individuals regardless of their ability to pay. However, this proposed reduction will make it more difficult for us to continue to provide the same level of care with very limited resources.

This proposed reduction will have a negative impact and make it more difficult for people to find care in the appropriate setting and enroll and remain in Medicaid. In these difficult economic times, it is more important than ever that the state is steadfast in its commitment to help those who cannot help themselves.

We urge you to consider our position on this very important matter.