



Commerce Committee

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Public Hearing

Testimony

By

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Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Commerce Committee, my name is Mary Holz-Clause and I am the Vice-President of Economic Development at the University of Connecticut. Thank you for allowing me to testify today on Raised Bill 224, *An Act Increasing the Competitiveness of Small and Medium –Size Business through Research and Development*.

Before I talk about the bill specifically, I would like to take a moment to update you on the University's efforts in commercialization and technology transfer. As the state's only public research institution, UConn continues to take its role in driving innovation and economic development seriously. University faculty have developed 242 patents over the last 13 years and the University has 97 active technology licenses and options currently. By the end of 2011, the University was home to 22 incubator companies which generated more than \$30 million in revenue and employed 81 employees. In the Stem Cell arena, our faculty have created four new human embryonic stem cell lines and an invention has been disclosed for cartilage replacement. At our Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, we have assisted more than 535 companies from a wide-range of industries since January 2007.

The Governor's and General Assembly's commitment to a second Eminent Faculty team and investment in the first building of a Storrs Technology Park will enable us to expand upon the economic achievements I referenced earlier. The University's first Eminent Faculty Team in Clean Energy currently has 87 active energy research awards that valued \$22 million last year. I am excited to report that UConn has already raised

more than the required industry match of \$2 million for the Eminent Faculty team and recruitment efforts are underway for the new team that will be critical to the Park's success.

In terms of the new Technology Park, since design money was awarded in August for the Park's first building, we have selected an architect. We also have completed a visioning process for the Park with Connecticut industry partners which included UTC, GE, Covidien, IBM and several smaller companies. This valuable industry input helped us to determine that Advanced Manufacturing and Advanced Materials will be the initial building's focus. This strategic direction aligns with both the industrial assets of Connecticut and the direction of Federal research priorities. The first building, called the Innovations Partnership building, will be 125,000 square foot multi-story research building comprised primarily of large, flexible-use laboratories containing specialized equipment for collaborative research. It will include space for business incubators, private space for use by individual companies, and office space. We believe it will provide a nexus of intellectual, physical and cyber assets that will lead to university-industry partnerships for research and innovations, technology commercialization and job growth.

While these are impressive achievements, we know that we must do more. It is for that reason that the University is grateful to the Committee for raising Senate Bill 224. While large Connecticut industries have the internal resources to support innovations in advanced manufacturing technologies, many small and medium-sized firms in Connecticut are at a competitive disadvantage due to lack of available funds for research and development. Funds to pursue applied research and development in advanced manufacturing technologies can enhance core competencies and introduce innovations that are needed to provide competitive advantages to Connecticut small- and medium-sized firms.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee for its continued support of the University of Connecticut. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide additional information.