

Testimony
David Quigley
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For the Appropriations Committee
7 pm, February 22, 2012

- Ladies and Gentlemen, I am David Quigley, Director, Physician Services of Norwalk Hospital.
- I am here to express my sincere concerns about the Governor's proposed \$550 million in budget cuts to Connecticut Hospitals.
- The proposed Hospital cuts are severe and unjustified. The cuts for Norwalk Hospital alone amount to a devastating \$28 million over three years—including \$3.7 million already rescinded this year!
- If the Governor's plan is enacted it will adversely affect the critical services and programs we currently provide. It will mean facing difficult decisions about how or whether we deliver those services. The proposed cuts threaten our mission to serve all those who come to us for care, regardless of ability to pay.
- The proposed budget cuts remove funds that were to be used to defray hospitals' losses for caring for our most vulnerable population – the poor and disadvantaged.
- In addition to this year's reduction to Norwalk Hospital, the Governor's budget reduction calls for slashing another \$8.8 million in the state's next fiscal year, and an additional \$15.4 million cut the year after.
- In all, Norwalk Hospital faces combined almost \$28 million in cuts through Fiscal Year 2015.
- The DSH pool is funded primarily through the hospital tax which was put in place to assist Hospitals that serve the neediest populations. When the tax was implemented, hospitals expressed fears that the tax someday would not be used for this original purpose—helping the needy. Under Governor Malloy's plan the state will continue to collect the tax revenue but will stop making the promised distributions to hospitals. This is deeply troubling.

- At Norwalk Hospital, we are doing everything we can to develop a sustainable model of health care for our region, including building partnerships. This budget plan places us at the tipping point — dramatically altering our region's safety net, affecting programs, services *and those who provide them*. The Governor said he wants to make a "more sustainable future for Connecticut," but the future he is creating for hospitals is absolutely unsustainable.
- So many of the state's policy priorities — from providing good jobs, to protecting the safety net, to providing an increased focus on mental health services — are part of what we do every day at Norwalk Hospital. All of this is at risk if the Governor's proposal goes forward.
- All of us at Norwalk Hospital urge you to reconsider these proposed cuts.
- Thank you.