



MILFORD HOSPITAL

**TESTIMONY OF
MILFORD HOSPITAL
SUBMITTED TO THE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

Friday, February 22, 2013

**HB 6350, AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2015,
AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO REVENUE**

Milford Hospital appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to **HB 6350, AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2015, AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO REVENUE.**

The budget proposed by Governor Malloy will devastate our hospital, patients, staff, and community.

Milford Hospital is a vital healthcare safety net for Milford, West Haven, Orange and Woodbridge. Whenever people need high quality, safe medical care, we are open and ready to help – 24 hours a day. We are dedicated to our mission of caring for everyone who walks through our doors, whether or not they can afford to pay.

Our contribution to the community extends beyond our caregiving.

Milford Hospital plays a critical role in our economy. We employ 771 people, and many others throughout our community are dependent on the business we generate. In total, we have an economic impact on our community of \$159,263,000. That is one of the reasons defunding hospitals hurts us all.

We cannot continue to absorb the deep cuts that the administration has been leveling at hospitals.

In December, in an effort to balance the state budget, the Governor turned to hospitals. He cut funds to Milford Hospital totaling \$1,702,889. We are reeling from this cut, and as a result, we have to make some very tough decisions. These cuts will make Milford Hospital's ability to care for our patients and our community extremely challenging. Although we are committed to keep patients first in everything we do, the cuts will adversely affect patient care. Decreasing the needed resources will reduce the quantity of healthcare services provided, ultimately adversely affecting the health outcomes of our patients.

Now, the Governor again is targeting hospitals to counter the deficit. This time, he is planning to cut \$8,142,078 from our hospital over the next two years.

Something has to give. We will have no choice but to cut services and programs. Unfortunately, we will have to look first at those programs and services that already lose money. More often than not, these are the ones that help the neediest in our communities. Jobs also will inevitably be affected since hospitals are about people providing care to people, and our single largest cost is staffing.

The proposed reductions will impede Milford Hospital's ability to make important investments in its infrastructure, such as information technology and replacing outdated diagnostic equipment to enhance patient care. Reduced resources will result in curtailing and possibly eliminating outreach programs for preventive care, such as free blood pressure clinics, blood cholesterol checks, diabetes screening, etc., all of which help us to maintain a healthy

community. Services such as treatments for wound care that are less than profitable but vital to patients will be eliminated. Lack of funds will also impact our efforts to train and improve staff performance for providing patient care. Lastly, consideration will be given to reducing hours for some positions, delaying or freezing staffing in open positions and eventually targeting specific position layoffs.

As you know, we are in the midst of major changes in healthcare, and in addition to the proposed hit from the Governor's budget, we are bracing for huge federal cuts.

In a dynamic industry with a rapidly changing, unpredictable landscape, we need to continue our focus on quality and patient safety initiatives and efforts to improve care efficiency. We need our staff to keep their focus on patients, and not be distracted by the worry that they will lose their jobs.

We need stable hospitals.

Our patients are relying on you. Our staff is relying on you. Our communities need you to protect hospital funding. As you develop your budget, please protect us, your Connecticut's hospitals.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.