



Testimony of Hartford HealthCare

Submitted to the

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Thursday, February 27, 2014

HB 5257 AAC Hospital Employees and Hospital Conversions

Hartford HealthCare (HHC) appreciates this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 5257. The proposal before the committee at this point in the legislative process, applies only to for profit hospital conversions. However, if language is added to the bill such that the that the law is applied to non-profit hospitals or systems acquiring other non-profit hospitals, it would be extremely difficult for HHC to maintain a strong non-profit presence in Connecticut.

HHC's partners include a tertiary-care teaching hospital, an acute-care community teaching hospital, an acute care hospital & trauma center, two community hospitals, two regional behavior health centers, a statewide clinical laboratory operation, a large primary care physician practice group, a regional home care system and a physical therapy and rehabilitation network. HHC has over 18,000 employees.

In 2012 the HHC system provided \$145 million in community benefits throughout the 101 towns in our primary service area. Seventy eight million of that amount was charity care. Some examples of our community benefits program include:

- Hartford Hospital's Black Men's health project – comprehensive approach to addressing the health prospects of black men and the disparities relative to the rate at which they suffer from chronic diseases like hypertension, diabetes, cancers, and other health challenges.
- Hospital of Central Connecticut's M.O.M.S. program – Mothers offering Mothers Support Program, providing mentors to help women 21 and under become successful and confident mothers.
- Backus Hospital – Health community pilot program integrating community benefits and services, hot spotting, community health education, and sustainability efforts-improving health care access for eastern CT

We are proud of those figures and our programs but more than that we are gratified to have had the opportunity to make a tangible positive difference in the lives of thousands of our neighbors.

In the last 14 months due to significant federal and state reimbursement cuts to hospitals, we have had to streamline and create efficiencies to make our hospitals deliver great care with fewer dollars. We have done that in large part by responding rapidly but with great thought and care to our patients, employees and the communities we serve.

As you are all well aware the health care delivery and payment system is in a period of rapid change, moving away from a volume based system to one of value. The overall effect has been to reduce funding. HHC embraces that change but needs to have flexibility to modify the system as circumstances warrant. The requirements set forth in HB 5257 would make such changes impossible.

Also, we need to consider such impact on the programs and free care referenced above that go to the very core of our mission as a non-profit. All of our HHC hospitals serve in communities with significant numbers of low income households. Our largest hospital, Hartford Hospital, serves the city with the highest poverty rate in the state, at thirty eight percent.

HHC aspires to be the next generation of integrated health systems, marked by strong patient focus, heightened efficiency, consistent quality performance and open, collaborative sharing of best practices. It is dedicated to providing patients with an exceptional, coordinated care experience and a single, high standard of service. Many of the restrictions contained in this proposal if applied to non-profits would severely impact this vision but more importantly would harm our patients and the communities we serve.

Again thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Contact: Kim Harrison 860-263-4137