

24 February 2015

Good evening.

To the Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and members of the Committee, I am Peter Kaminsky, Professor of Music in the School of Fine Arts at the University of Connecticut – Storrs campus. This is my 22<sup>nd</sup> year as full-time professor. First of all, thank you for your consideration and attention, and especially for all of your support for the University of Connecticut.

I and my University colleagues — faculty, staff, and administration — understand the enormous challenges you face in reducing the budget deficit; and we are grateful that you are making your best effort to address this.

At the same time, the recommended budget released last week creates a gap of approximately \$40 million between the state funding and what is needed to operate the University next year.

Unquestionably, a reduction to the appropriation of that magnitude would have a devastating impact on all aspects of the educational enterprise in the Music Department and the School of Fine Arts as a whole: these include teaching and learning, recruiting and retention of outstanding students and faculty, technological and pedagogical innovation, and growing interdisciplinary tracks. With the hiring of 3 new tenure-track faculty this year, our Department is already well ahead of last year in its significant increase in freshman applications, and in faculty outreach to all parts of the state.

The deep budget cuts to the University would reverse the progress made at UConn and, speaking personally, have a serious adverse affect on my work. I take considerable pride in successfully balancing my duties in teaching (with among the highest teacher ratings in the School), administration (as Associate Dept. Head), research (recognition as one of the leading authorities on turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup> century French music), and advising (principal advisor to our candidates for the music education degree). Maintaining this level of productivity — and meeting the educational needs of our undergraduate and graduate students — absolutely depends on the commitment by the State to adequately fund the University.

One of the reasons that I have remained at UConn for 22 years and counting is the dynamic investment that the state has been making. At a time that other states were not investing in their state flagship, our legislature made strategic investments, and that is what enabled us to achieve the amazing progress discussed by President Herbst earlier in the day.

To some, it may appear that music is a frill. However, one only needs to watch a nationally televised women's basketball game and hear our world-class UConn Marching Band, or attend one of our opera productions which rival (IMHO, exceed in quality) those of Tanglewood and the New York City Opera, or attend graduation and hear our students

sing the National Anthem, and our Wind Ensemble play the musical programme, or go to an inner city public high school in Hartford and watch our New Orleans-style brass band the Funky Dawgz — I could go on a lot more about the artistic and service contribution of the Music Department to the University and the State. All of this is put in jeopardy given the potential consequences of this cut. The cumulative effect of this cut — on our students, our academic programs, and the role UConn will play in the state's future, economic and otherwise — will be catastrophic.

Thank you for listening. As a representative member of UConn's Music Department and a devoted and loyal Husky forever, I urge you to continue to invest in our future — that is, the intelligent, creative, and committed students, faculty, staff and administration that are the University of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

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