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Connecticut State Legislature  
Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Legislature,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today.

I appreciate that balancing this year's budget is very challenging. I realize that some budgetary reductions and recissions are necessary.

I became familiar with similar constraints as UConn AAUP President during the 2010 concession negotiations. We worked cooperatively with the executive and legislative branches to achieve a balanced budget.

In that same spirit, I come to you today.

As a parallel, American industry has transitioned from exponential growth to sustainable productivity. I see UConn at a similar junction. After much growth, what is a sustainable model for UConn?

I submit that the core of UConn, and any university, is the well-being of its faculty and students. Exceptional faculty have been recruited and their prominence will continue to attract stellar colleagues and strong students. I offer that budgetary priorities should more directly reflect that importance.

This current budget crisis provides an opportunity:

**Invest *directly* in faculty retention and Connecticut student recruitment.**

I offer that conspicuously opportune and enduring choices are

- redirecting narrow, high risk investments in the tech park and focused STEM education more broadly to faculty retention and recruitment of Connecticut students. Please consider references [1-5].
- reconsidering lavish plans for student recreation facilities with climbing walls to alternatively promote the rich local outdoor fitness options.
- reduction of athletic investments to reflect conference membership changes.

In particular, much previous testimony on the tech park cited only benefits. Consider references [4,5] for perspective on the risks.

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Please review the record and note that I offered similar cautionary testimony about Next Generation Connecticut on March 4, 2013. I applaud that you are reconsidering those investments. The underlying premise of available STEM employment is questionable in light of contrary studies [1,2,3] that say that the claimed shortage is a myth, promoted for selfish business interests.

Please use this budgetary challenge to re-examine the fiscal investment in Next Generation Connecticut and the Tech Park and big time athletics.

Please consider alternative investments to retain existing faculty versus salary inversion and to educate the best Connecticut students in preference to comparable external candidates (both domestic and foreign) – even though they pay more tuition dollars. Please recruit Connecticut students with attractive scholarship offers.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas J. Peters".

Thomas J. Peters, Ph.D.

References:

[1] <http://spectrum.ieee.org/at-work/education/the-stem-crisis-is-a-myth>

[2] [http://pipeline.corante.com/archives/2013/09/03/the\\_myth\\_of\\_the\\_stem\\_shortage\\_in\\_detail.php](http://pipeline.corante.com/archives/2013/09/03/the_myth_of_the_stem_shortage_in_detail.php)

[3] <http://dish.andrewsullivan.com/2013/09/09/the-stem-surplus-ctd/>

[4] Massey, D, Quntas, P., Wield, D., High Tech Fantasies, Routledge, New York, 1992.

[5] Savoie, R. A. and Payne, D., The 21st Century Technology-based Regional Economy: A Roadmap for Success, University of New Orleans Press, 2012.