



**TESTIMONY OF
DAN MCINTYRE, PRESIDENT
CHARLOTTE HUNGERFORD HOSPITAL
SUBMITTED TO THE
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2015**

SB 945, An Act Concerning The Tax Exempt Status Of Certain Hospital Facilities

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 945, An Act Concerning The Tax Exempt Status Of Certain Hospital Facilities**. On behalf of Charlotte Hungerford Hospital's Board of Governors, staff, physicians, I write to express opposition this bill and urge the General Assembly to keep the current tax exemption and Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) funding structure for hospitals in place.

Connecticut, like the rest of the nation, enacted the property tax exemption for hospitals many years ago in recognition of the unique and critically important role hospitals play in their communities. SB 945 would remove the property tax exemption for properties that are not part of a not-for-profit hospital's main campus. If passed into law, Connecticut would be the only state in the nation to levy property tax on not-for-profit hospitals in such a manner.

In reading this proposal, my mind was flooding with the many efforts Charlotte Hungerford Hospital provides in the form of outreach and support – evidence of us fulfilling our mission as a not-for-profit and health care provider. I thought about our initiatives involving our chronic disease population, our homeless population, the partnering and promoting we do around healthy lifestyle choices, our physician talks, and free screening clinics. These community benefit programs improve the quality of life in the towns we serve and are points of pride for us.

Next year marks our 100th anniversary as a health care provider. It is a proud history founded on the simple premise that we exist to "...serve as a beacon of hope for the ill and injured." We have stayed true to this principle even as health care has changed so rapidly over time, particularly in recent years. Our

commitment, I am proud to say, has not wavered, even as the financial burdens imposed on hospitals by the state and federal government have grown increasingly unbearable.

There is a context within which this bill, and all similar bills must be viewed. It's consideration is being asked as part of a budget that also further cuts Medicaid provider rates, increases the hospital tax, eliminates the low-cost hospital pool, and withholds hospital supplemental payments. Excluding the fiscal impact of SB 945, cuts and taxes in the proposed budget amount to approximately \$800 million collectively over the course of the biennium to CT hospitals.

In response, we have made difficult choices to account for the resources lost due to government underfunding of the Medicaid program, the hospital tax, and other cuts, and over the last few years, jobs have been eliminated or outsourced, services have been reduced, and investments in our future have been put on hold. SB 945 would place yet another fiscal burden us - the financial burden of paying property taxes.

I believe Connecticut hospitals epitomize the reason that the property tax exemption was created. A policy direction that modifies this simple and long-standing proposition is unwise, unfair, nonsensical, and counter-productive to the sustainability of, and accessibility to, quality health care.

I urge you to keep the current tax exemption and PILOT funding structure in place. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. McIntyre

President & Executive Director

The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital