



Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
Public Hearing
February 26, 2015

***HB 6813 AN ACT REQUIRING TRANSPARENCY OF EXPENDITURES BY THE
HIGHER EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS.***

***HB 5484 AN ACT REQUIRING AUDITS BY THE AUDITORS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
OF FOUNDATIONS ESTABLISHED FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
EDUCATION.***

***SB230 AN ACT CONCERNING THE FUNDS AND RECORDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
CONNECTICUT FOUNDATION.***

Hello, I am David Gregorio, a professor at the UCONN School of Medicine and President of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) at the UConn Health Center. I am here on behalf of the 550 clinicians, educators and researchers who, through the generous and visionary support of our state and University's many benefactors, are intent on making UCONN a great University. I have worked here since 1986 and I cannot imagine what we can accomplish over the next 30 years of my career! Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 6813, HB 5484 and SB230.

The citizens of Connecticut rightfully expect UConn to prepare our undergraduate, graduate and professional students to become Connecticut's future entrepreneurs, to obtain the skills needed by Connecticut employers and to recognize and remedy the social, economic and health ills that our population may face in coming years.

The public also expects UConn's faculty to enhance Connecticut's vitality by driving innovations that increase productivity, foster economic growth, mitigate hazards of everyday life and overall enhance well being and quality of life of our citizens.

Expectations of this magnitude cannot, and should not, depend only on appropriations by our state government or the whim of agencies that fund grants and contracts. We can all agree that UConn and the Health Center need philanthropy to play an ever more important role in fulfilling our missions and best serve the state of Connecticut. That 76% of our Health Center's operation budget comes from patient revenues and extramural sources, brings this reality into sharp focus.

Together, we must commit to increasing philanthropic support so that vital and often game changing activities can be sustained on our campuses. Private donations fund endowed chairs that provide resources to recruit and retain outstanding clinicians and researchers in a most competitive marketplace for talent. Charitable gifts fund groundbreaking scholarship that advances technology, theory and application on subjects of vital importance to us all. And equally importantly, the generosity of our friends make it financially possible for many students to attend this great university.

Philanthropy through our UCONN foundation has been remarkably successful. Over the past three fiscal years, the UConn Foundation has provided the Health Center with nearly \$21 million in financial support. The AAUP understands firsthand the importance of that support. In the same three year period, one out of every two members of our health center faculty have made personal contributions to the UConn Foundation.

So, it is difficult to understand why, at this pivotal moment, there are proposals that could well make it more difficult to raise private funds that support our university's mission. New obstacles around disclosure of donations and review of expenditures may precipitously stifle giving and put vital initiatives at risk. Policies and procedures already in place to monitor giving and spending are sufficient and have proven the right mix of confidentiality and accountability that most donors require.

We greatly appreciate the private contributions made by graduates of our medical and dental schools. Another source of donations come from our patients and their families, who are grateful for the quality care they received and the dedication of the doctors, nurses, technicians and other UConn Health Center employees who provided that care.

Therefore, on behalf of my members working at the UCONN Health Center, I respectfully request that you consider not just the intent of the proposal you now consider, but the unintended consequences that may affect the UConn Foundation and those of us who benefit from their work. Thank you for your attention.