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AppTestimony
Testimony for AHEC funding

Good Evening,

Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and members of the Committee, I am Bayan Abunar, a 1st year Medical Student at UConn. I am a resident of New Britain, CT and have been living in CT for the majority of my life.

Thank you for all of your incredible support for the University of Connecticut Health Center. Through the state investments in UConn Health, from UCONN 21st Century to Bioscience CT to your regular investments in our

School of Medicine and Dental Medicine, you have made it a great university that is making a real difference to UConn students and our state. The challenges you face in reducing the state budget deficit are daunting and I don't envy the task before you. I want to thank you for the opportunity to write to you and urge you to minimize the cuts to UConn Health.

These deep cuts would reverse the progress made at UConn Health and I fear they will negatively impact my education going forward as well as my ability to be the best doctor I can be.

One of the reasons that I enrolled at UCONN is because their commitment to student education as well as some key academic programs. There are many programs that are going to suffer if these cuts are implemented; however, the one that has impacted me the most is Area Health Education Center network that runs an interdisciplinary health care organization program called the Urban Service Track (UST).

UST is part of the larger AHEC network that has supported me and gotten me to where I am today. *It was through AHEC, that I go the guidance and mentorship to become a National Health Service Corp Scholar, one of 150 in the entire country.* I write to you today as a product of the AHEC organization, as an AmeriCorps member who served with AHEC last year, as a medical student in their first year as well as an urban service track scholar. AHEC has helped thousands of students like me across CT to work hard and achieve their goals and I cannot see them go.

I cannot stress consequences of these cuts enough. The effect will be EXTREMELY DIFFICULT—the AHEC programs and the role UConn Health will play in the state's future, economic and otherwise.

Again, thank you for the opportunity reach out to you and for your ongoing support of UConn Health. I urge you to find a way to restore these cuts so that UConn Health can continue to provide tremendous benefits to our students and more student like me can have the chance to achieve goals they never thought would be possible.

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