

I cannot begin to express my gratitude to the legislature of the State of Connecticut, as I simply would not be here today had it not been for their generosity. Six years ago, I was faced with the decision of picking between SUNY Binghamton and UConn. At that point in time, I was an out of state student with two concerns: quality of education and financial cost. I loved UConn from the moment I stepped in the Student Union on my first tour and subsequently got trapped for 45 minutes while it poured outside. I took it as a sign, this was where I was supposed to be. After being admitted in the winter of 2010, I waited anxiously for my financial aid package, as I knew I would not be able to finance my education without a scholarship. When I received my documents in April 2010 and the money came through, the course of my life was altered and the first of several pieces that have formed who I am today fell into place.

Three years later, as I began applying to medical school, I was faced with the decision again: return to New York or chance that I would be accepted to UConn and spend four more years in the University system that I love. On November 4<sup>th</sup> 2013, my dream came true and I cancelled my remaining medical school interviews; I was staying at UConn. Two years later, I could not be any happier with my decision. I've moved to Connecticut and have since decided that this is where I want to raise a family and practice.

Anyone who has seen UConn five years ago can clearly see how much we have improved. Storrs is replete with new buildings and UConn Health now has some of the most modern facilities in the country. Do not sabotage this progress. The value of an UConn degree has never been higher and this is due in large part to the support of the legislature. UConn School of Medicine is on the cusp of a ground breaking change in curriculum and the class size is increasing to meet demands. We need to support these students, as they will be the ones tasked with taking care of Connecticut in the coming decades. By investing in the University of Connecticut, you are investing in the highest quality student. You are investing in the future of this State. Regardless of political stance, there simply is no other choice to make than to prevent these budget cuts.