



TESTIMONY OF
ST. VINCENT'S MEDICAL CENTER
SUBMITTED TO THE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 11, 2016

HB 5044, An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017.

On behalf of our patients, our associates, medical staff and the patients and families we serve, **St. Vincent's Medical Center** appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5044, An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017**. This bill cuts more than \$90 million from core healthcare services – hospitals and vital mental health programs.

These cuts provide a short-term budget fix, when what the state needs is a long-term plan for hospital sustainability in Connecticut.

For more than 112 years, St. Vincent's has served the Greater Bridgeport community. Founded in 1903 by the Daughters of Charity, we treat everyone who comes through our doors, 24 hours a day, regardless of ability to pay. We are the largest employer in the City of Bridgeport with more than 3,500 associates, including our medical staff. In 2015, St. Vincent's total direct economic impact on our community was greater than \$900 million. We are a safety net hospital, and last year, delivered more than \$56 million in community benefit.

But this job is much harder because we are under significant financial stress.

We've done extraordinary things to minimize the impact to patient care. And we continue to be challenged to achieve our mission under the continued cuts to hospitals each year. Over the last two fiscal years, Connecticut hospitals, including ours, have eliminated more than 1,400 jobs, reduced staff salaries and benefits, reduced services, and postponed investments in technology and infrastructure.

The cuts continue to place stress on our operations in this current fiscal year as we build our upcoming budget knowing that we have continued significant reductions to address in 2016-2017.

We know the state is facing a challenging budget, but we have already been cut and taxed so significantly that it is hurting patient care, access, jobs, and our economy. We are asking you to consider a solution that helps hospitals as well as the state, as suggested by the Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis.

The Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis at the University of Connecticut released an economic analysis showing that by **returning to hospitals the taxes they pay to the state, the state can generate 6,600 jobs, and bring in close to \$35 million every year starting in the first year.** This solution would enable the state to grow jobs and revenue quickly, and maintain it – as well as strengthen our healthcare system – for years to come. *Investing in hospitals is a win for our state's economy, patients, communities, and healthcare system.*

The staff and physicians of St. Vincent's Health Services are members of your communities. They work tirelessly to perform extraordinary acts every day- including serving patients with compassion, healing the sick, delivering babies, providing support for families in crisis, teaching future healthcare providers and the community at large – ensuring that every day, our mission to meet the needs of the sick, poor, homeless, handicapped and frail elderly in the greater Bridgeport area is fulfilled.

Our community members need their hospital to be there to protect them when they have an emergency. We need a sustainable healthcare environment in our state, not more cuts and taxes.

Vote “No” on the hospital and healthcare cuts contained in HB 5044.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.