



**Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee**

**March 8, 2016**

**Testimony**

**By**

**Mun Choi**

**Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, I am Mun Choi, the Provost at the University of Connecticut and am here today to talk about Senate Bill 333, *An Act Concerning Foundations of Constituent Units and Public Institutions of Higher Education Institutions*.

Joining me is Joshua Newton, the president of the UConn Foundation, and John Malfettone, a UConn graduate, member of the UConn Foundation Board of Directors and an executive at Clayton, Dubilier & Rice – a private equity investment firm in New York City.

I would like to begin by thanking the committee for allowing us to appear before you today, but more importantly for your vision and leadership when it comes to higher education in Connecticut. Due to your transformative investments, the University continues to attract diverse, high-achieving students.

If there was any doubt that UConn will rely more and more on the Foundation in order to be successful, the events of last few weeks and months have made it clear that private philanthropy must play a large role in our future. The proposed budget released last month would result in a \$19.5 million budget shortfall at UConn and \$11.7 million at UConn Health next year. Unfortunately, this is just the latest chapter in a longer term trend.

UConn, like many public universities in New England, did not place an emphasis on private giving for many years. The assumption was most likely that the state would always be able to fund the lion's share of the university's budget. Those days are over.

Private giving, which has grown significantly under the leadership of Susan Herbst and Josh Newton, is absolutely essential to UConn's stability and success – now and even more so in the future. Let me give you some concrete examples of the important contributions the UConn Foundation has helped to facilitate.

The University and the Foundation – through the relationships it has cultivated - generated \$81.7 million in industry partnerships that will lead to talent generation, and scientific and technological

breakthroughs and essential experience for our students – the key goals of NextGenCT. These partnerships will focus on research, research equipment, scholarships, internships and faculty. They include:

- \$25M UConn-FEI Center for Advanced Microscopy and Materials Analysis
- \$9M Eversource Energy Center
- \$7.5M GE Advanced Technology Initiative
- \$7.2M Fraunhofer Center for Energy Innovation
- \$10M UTC Institute for Advanced Systems Engineering
- \$7.5M Additive Manufacturing & Innovation Center
- \$7.5M Flexible Hybrid Electronics Manufacturing Innovation Institute
- \$6M Comcast Center for Security Innovation
- \$2M EDAX-Partnership for Advanced Electron Microscopy Cameras & Detectors

These strategic partnerships will allow UConn to develop world-class strengths in areas of expertise that match the needs of Connecticut's industry growth opportunities. We remain grateful to the Foundation for making them possible.

In addition, last year the Foundation provided the University \$16.3 million in student support like scholarships, fellowships, awards and grants, \$5.2 million for faculty support, \$9.6 million for research, \$27.5 million for program support and \$19.4 million was donated for capital improvements. This is critical support that supplements state support.

But even with these recent successes, the Foundation's endowment is a fraction of what it should be and needs to be. That is why President Herbst and Josh are putting so much energy into driving philanthropy and cultivating donors.

We are pleased that the bill under consideration allows the Foundation to continue fundraising aggressively. Most importantly, it will give our donors a level of comfort that they are giving to an entity that will safeguard their privacy, has appropriate oversight and allows them to provide philanthropic support to the University in the manner that they deem appropriate.

Again, thank you for your tremendous continued support of the University of Connecticut. I would now like to turn it over to Josh who will give you more specifics on the legislation.