

**TESTIMONY OF
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE
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**

Hartford Healthcare 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. For Hartford Healthcare these midterm adjustments cut \$20 million from our 5 acute care hospitals in Hartford, New Britain, Norwich, Meriden and Windham.

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

Hartford Healthcare serves more than 83,000 inpatients and nearly 2,000,000 outpatients each year. Beyond the lifesaving care we provide 24 hours a day, we contribute over \$4 billion to our local and state economies each year and invest over \$200 million in improving the health of our community.

Deep cuts to the state's hospital industry not only affects patients but also the state's economy. Hospitals provide 55,000 full-time jobs and the economic activity represented by each of those jobs creates another job in our communities. That's 110,000 jobs that can be directly or indirectly attributed to hospitals. Every year, hospitals in this state spend \$4.4 billion on goods and services - from medical supplies to food and energy. Hospital spending generates another \$4.4 billion in local economic activity.

HHC, the fourth largest employer in the state with 18,000 employees, has sustained \$228 million in Medicaid cuts since 2013, requiring us to make tough decisions which affect peoples' lives, employees and patients alike. We have cut 1,000 jobs across the system, reduced services and in some instances, closed programs.

Hartford Healthcare provides core healthcare services to all of the people in Connecticut, 24 hours a day, regardless of ability to pay. We offer safe, accessible, equitable, affordable, patient-centered care that protects and improves people's lives.

We recognize that the state is facing a challenging budget, but the past four years of significant Medicaid cuts, combined with an increasing tax burden, is hurting our ability to provide top quality patient care and access to the services our patients need. These challenges also hurt our ability to provide good jobs and strengthen our local economies. We are asking you to consider a solution that helps hospitals as well as the state:

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 in new revenue 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.

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.