Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representatives DiMassa and Horn, and members of the Appropriations Committee;

My name is Margaret Sanders, and I am an undergraduate student at the University of Connecticut. I am currently pursuing a Biological Sciences major with a minor in Communication at UConn and have an interest in scientific communication. During my time here at UConn, I would like to pursue research in both the biology and communication field. I am a coxswain on the UConn Men’s Crew Team, a member of the Women in Mathematics, Science, and Engineering (WiMSE) Learning Community, and a member of the Women in STEM (WiSTEM) organization at UConn. The vast opportunities that UConn offers has allowed me to further pursue my interests and career goals thus far. I am writing to testify on the Budget Hearing for Higher Education.

Providing UConn with the financial support to foster a highly skilled workforce for the state is necessary. My education at UConn prepares me for biological research and experience in the medical field that is necessary for the future of healthcare and medicine. As an undergraduate studying biology, students are encouraged to get involved in laboratory experiences and research. This teaches students skills that are the foundation of the next generation of healthcare providers. My biology degree from UConn will provide me and the next generation of doctors with the necessary skills and information to enhance our knowledge of medicine as well as the ever changing field of medical technology. Being a student at UConn has thus far allowed me to participate in research at UConn Health in Farmington, Connecticut. Working here enabled me to learn about creating vaccines for Lyme disease and syphilis. I was able to learn relevant applications to real-world problems using the resources that UConn provided for me. UConn provides its students with the resources to merge these two developing fields in order to provide for the people and the state of Connecticut.

Support for UConn ensures the recruitment of dedicated, passionate and well-informed faculty and staff. The foundation of quality undergraduate education lies in the distinction of UConn’s staff, which is high. I chose UConn over other universities for my post-secondary education because of the reputation of my program and the resources to complete a wide variety of research types. The foundation of the biology program lies in its faculty that provide the education and support for its students. The amount of opportunities for undergraduates to get involved in research, particularly in STEM has been vast, and must continue to be so. Providing students with these resources and opportunities is essential in order to maintain the rigor of the programs here and the real-world experiences that students come here to gain.
UConn is a vital asset to the State of Connecticut and maintaining state’s support for UConn is critical to my continued access to quality education. In the past, the state budget has provided generous support to UConn’s important mission of providing education, service, and research to the state and residents of Connecticut, and I strongly encourage you to continue this generosity in the next budget.

Sincerely,

Margaret Sanders
Farmington
margaret.sanders@uconn.edu