



CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

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Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering Reports to General Assembly on Implementation of UCHC Study Recommendations

Hartford, CT — The Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE) released a report today entitled, "Implementation of University of Connecticut Health Center (UCHC) Study Recommendations." CASE was engaged as an Independent Monitor, at the request of and acting on behalf of the Connecticut General Assembly to monitor and report on progress regarding the implementation of recommendations from the 2008 CASE study, "A Needs-Based Analysis of the University of Connecticut Health Center Facilities Plan" in accordance with the provisions of Special Act 08-4.

The comments cited in today's CASE report are based upon meetings with UCHC and its hospital partners, and additional information provided by UCHC. The report focuses on Phase 2 (Aug. 4, 2008 – Feb. 3, 2009) of a two-phase process. Phase 2 involved monitoring and reporting on progress regarding UCHC's selection of hospital partners through a solicitation of interest process.

UCHC received four proposals – three from Bristol Hospital, Connecticut Children's Medical Center and St. Francis Hospital interested in serving as medical education partners – and one comprehensive proposal from Hartford Healthcare Corporation (HHC) in collaboration with The Hospital of Central Connecticut (HCC) that provided for HHC to serve as a principal clinical partner, and both HHC and HCC to serve as a medical education partners. Efforts regarding the details of individual affiliation agreements have been focused on developing the Connecticut Health Education and Research Collaborative, designed to enhance the education and research missions of all participating partners.

The proposed principal partnership between UCHC and HHC would create a University Hospital on two campuses, in Farmington and Hartford. The proposal calls for the construction of a replacement hospital of approximately 250 beds at UCHC, which will be accomplished within the existing number of licensed beds of Hartford Hospital and John Dempsey Hospital. Since adding hospital beds to the Greater Hartford Region was a major objection voiced by many of the regional hospitals, being able to construct a replacement hospital without adding additional beds to the region overcomes this objection.

While the framework and foundations for the articulation of detailed agreements have been developed, the CASE report cites the necessity for UCHC and its partners to complete this process by finalizing affiliation agreements that will set forth the details of their relationships and operating understandings.

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The report notes that the implementation of the plans developed by UCHC and its regional hospital partners is expected to provide an opportunity for added economic impact through the creation of new opportunities driven by expanded research initiatives and improved quality of health care. These opportunities are expected to create economic growth and new jobs, and make the Greater Hartford region a destination for health care.

The CASE Project Committee therefore concluded that action is needed to achieve the goals of the state and the University of Connecticut. Failure to act jeopardizes both the status and the research capacity of UConn's medical and dental schools. Furthermore, failure to act requires continued operation of an inefficient, obsolete John Dempsey Hospital with its attendant structural operating deficits or assures its eventual closure with subsequent loss of on-site clinical capacity for teaching and clinical research. As stated in the Academy's initial report, maintaining the status quo is unacceptable. The cost of any eventual action by the state to sustain quality medical education and research capabilities as well as to achieve a high quality of medical care for the people of the region and the state will only continue to steadily increase. UCHC's plan has the potential, if implemented, to serve as a major economic stimulus for the region.

The CASE report notes that the state of Connecticut is at a crossroads. It can maintain the status quo, or it can look to the future by supporting the proposed vision for medical education and research in the Greater Hartford Region. This vision includes endorsement of the principal partnership between the University of Connecticut Health Center and Hartford Healthcare Corporation, as well as construction of a replacement hospital on the UCHC Campus and the formation of the Connecticut Health Education and Research Collaborative that includes UCHC's regional hospital partners.

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