



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 5, 2020**

**HB 5015, An Act Concerning The Governor's Budget Recommendations For
Human Services**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5015, An Act Concerning The Governor's Budget Recommendations For Human Services**. CHA opposes section 2 of this bill.

Before commenting on this bill, it is important to point out that Connecticut hospitals and health systems provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay, and work to improve the health of those who live in our communities. Supporting Connecticut's hospitals strengthens our healthcare system and our economy.

Section 2 of HB 5015 repeals section 315 of Public Act 19-117. Section 315 requires the Department of Social Services to change the rate it will pay Natchaug Hospital for inpatient services in FY 2021 to a Medicaid payment rate. Repealing this section will result in a reduction of \$454,000 to Natchaug Hospital.

In 2019, the General Assembly approved this vitally important increase in the reimbursement rate for inpatient services provided by Natchaug Hospital in recognition of the critical psychiatric and substance abuse treatment services provided to children, adolescents, and adults. These services are crucial to the health and welfare of Connecticut residents, given that hospitals across the state are seeing more patients, including more children and young adults, where a behavioral health condition was the principal or secondary diagnosis.¹

Natchaug Hospital is the only licensed psychiatric hospital in eastern Connecticut. In addition to inpatient child and adolescent psychiatric services, the hospital is unique in that it also provides an on-site school for these patients so they do not fall behind in their studies. The rate increase included in the biennial budget adopted last year will enable Natchaug Hospital to continue to provide the psychiatric and substance abuse treatment services required by these patients.

Thank you for your consideration of our position. For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.

¹ Inpatient and Emergency Department visits where a behavioral health condition was the principal or secondary diagnosis increased from 29% of all hospital visits in FY 2015 to 39% in FY 2018. *Data Source: FY 2018 ChimeData.*