

**Testimony of Abigail Immanuel  
UConn School of Medicine- Class of 2023**

**Appropriations Committee  
2/18/2020 Public Hearing**

**RE: UConn Health Budget**

To the Legislative Appropriations Committee,

My name is Abigail Immanuel, and I am a first-year medical student at UConn School of Medicine. Though I am a relatively new member to the UConn Health Center community, this institution has already influenced my life in huge ways.

I remember hearing my undergraduate pre-med advisor at Quinnipiac University tell us eager, pre-med freshman about how tough it was to get into medical school in the U.S. First, there was a long list of classes we had to take to meet the prerequisites. Next, we had to conquer MCAT, a behemoth of a test that was unlike any exam I had previously taken. To top it all off, we had to demonstrate we were well-rounded individuals who had a solid reason for wanting to become a physician one day, and we would be competing against thousands of other like-minded pre-med students for limited spots. I remember that as I became a sophomore in college, my pre-med journey was characterized by countless hours of MCAT preparation, research, tutoring, and volunteering. The thought frequently crossed my mind: "What if, after all this work, I am rejected by all the schools I apply to?"

I am beyond grateful to say that this was not the case. I was accepted to some wonderful medical schools, and making the decision to attend UCHC was by no means a quick and easy one. However, as I look back on that day when I committed to UConn, I have absolutely no regrets. This school has challenged me in ways that have tested my mental and emotional abilities. Despite having a mere six months of medical school under my belt, I have seen patients almost every week in the clinic, performed physical exams, taken patient histories, helped administer free healthcare to those in need, taught children the importance of personal hygiene, learned how to be truly independent, witnessed the sheer complexity of the human body, held a heart in my hands, failed a couple of quizzes but excelled at many others, made connections with faculty members, worked with my peers to solve problems, found ways to cope with stress, and discovered that my motivation for being a doctor is stronger than I originally thought. If this is what the first six months of medical taught me, I cannot wait to see what the remainder of my time at UConn will bring.

I sincerely ask that you consider the importance of funding UConn Health for the sake of the numerous people who depend upon its services – its patients, its employees, its students, its staff, its partners, and the Hartford County community. This institution has already done so much good and I am eager to see what it will continue to do from here on out.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Abigail Immanuel, MD Candidate Class of 2023