



**Testimony of Ruby Blackmon, AFSCME Local 196
Appropriations Public Hearing on the Governor's Proposed FY 21 Budget Adjustments
February 18, 2020**

Dear members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Ruby Blackmon. I live in New Britain and work as a processing technician at Central Connecticut State University. My daughter and I have both received excellent care and treatment at UConn Health. We are fans of this great institution.

I am also the President of AFSCME Local 196. My union represents 450 state administrative-clerical workers in this region, including more than 250 dedicated staff at UConn Health. Together, we are asking you to support the grant funding necessary to maintain UCH as Connecticut's flagship teaching hospital.

AFSCME Local 196 members are the administrative backbone of our great public hospital. They interact with everyone who touches this hospital, including patients, families, doctors, nurses and so many more. I am here to tell you that front-line workers are concerned about the future of UConn Health. UConn Health is the state's only public hospital and provides many benefits to our citizens, including many who cannot afford treatment at private hospitals.

We want to be partners in protecting UConn Health and serving our communities. In our view, "Public-Private Partnership" is a fancy term for privatization. Privatization will undermine the public mission and public obligation of this great university.

On behalf of AFSCME Local 196 and all the union members here today, please work with us to keep UConn Health operating as a public hospital that serves the public good.

Thank you.