

UConn HEALTH

February 8, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to extend my testimony on behalf of the University of Connecticut and UConn Health. I arrived at the medical school a little less than a year ago to chair the Department of Public Health Science after 25 years in a similar department at Tufts University. The change and transition has been good for me and quite educational. Prior to applying for this position, I did not have any deep understanding of the quality of teaching, education and service at UConn, nor did I grasp well the critical ways in which the university and hospital support the state.

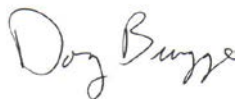
My department is focused on public health, by which we mean addressing health problems from a preventive and population perspective. Preventing adverse health outcomes in the first place is vastly preferable to treating them after they develop. Although, prevention is easier said than done and effective preventive programs and interventions require careful development and serious evaluation. After all, public health programs that sound good, but are not effective waste precious resources. That is where our research and evaluation capacity comes in.

In my department, we conduct research on issues such as obesity, the opioid epidemic, alcohol abuse, cancer, HIV, air pollution and much more. Most of our efforts are directed at not only doing the research, but disseminating it in ways that it can inform policy and practice and make a difference in the world in real time. Some of our evaluation work is directly with Connecticut state agencies such as DMHAS, led by Dr. Ungemack in my department. A center affiliated with my department and led by Dr. Broder, focuses on developmental disabilities.

Teaching public health is of equal important to us. We have graduated about 1000 people with graduate degrees in public health, many of them from or going into Connecticut state agencies or working in Connecticut after they graduate. We also teach medical students so that they graduate with a broader understand of public health approaches. And we teach hundreds of undergraduates on the Storrs Campus, inspiring a new generation of young people to take an interest in public health.

For me it has been a positive experience to move to a state university with an intrinsically public mission that objectively contributes to the greater good of the state every day. We have multiple tenure track faculty positions open in my department currently and as we work to fill them, I am ever cognizant of the need to preserve and expand the contribution the department makes of the health of the people of Connecticut.

Sincerely,



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Professor and Chair

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