

WORKING FOR A BETTER UCONN

UCONN Graduate Employee Union
United Auto Workers, Local 6950
1734 Storrs Rd. Storrs, CT 06268



Testimony of Rachel Schumacher on behalf of the

Graduate Employee Union Local 6950
United Automobile Workers of America (GEU-UAW UCONN)

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing
Thursday, March 4, 2021

In support of: H.B. No. 6439 (Comm) An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, and Making Appropriations Therefor

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representatives Dathan and Nolan, and members of the Appropriations Committee;

My name is Rachel Schumacher, and I am both a graduate student and Graduate Assistant at the University of Connecticut and a member of the Graduate Employee Union (GEU-UAW Local 6950). In the School of Dramatic Arts I function as a safety and educational leader to the undergraduate department. Specifically working in the electric shop to manage and orchestrate tasks, such as rigging heavy equipment and running the electrical side of our theatrical productions. I am in the unique position to also be a graduate student and learn alongside them. My education strictly relies on this Graduate Assistant as it is my sole source of income. I am writing to testify on the Budget Hearing for Higher Education.

Support for UConn allows us to maintain a reputation as a competitive and strong university, ensuring that we can recruit and retain dedicated and skilled faculty and staff. I chose UConn over other universities for my graduate program because of the reputation of my program, the resources to complete a degree and uphold an assistantship, as well the renowned faculty.

Support for UConn allows us to continue to provide access to affordable and high-quality education for 20,000 undergraduates. Quality and accessibility of that education depends on continued investment (declining state support = larger classes, higher tuition, etc). Together we at UConn prepare highly skilled and professional students upon graduation. A reputation precedes coast to coast. The system of education in this country relies on support of the state to shoulder our successes. We make each other look good!

UConn is a vital asset to the State of Connecticut. In the past, the state budget has provided generous support to UConn's important mission of providing education, service, and research to the state and residents of Connecticut, and I strongly encourage you to continue this generosity in the next budget.

Sincerely,

Rachel Schumacher

Dramatic Arts MFA/Graduate Assistant

Willimantic

rachel.schumacher@uconn.edu