



Testimony in Support of House Bill 5575: An Act Establishing Community Standards of Health and Hospital Care for Private, For-Profit Hospital Ownership

**Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut
March 8, 2021**

Thank you, chairs and members of the Committee on Public Health, for the opportunity to express our support of House Bill 5575: An Act Establishing Community Standards of Health and Hospital Care for Private, For-Profit Hospital Ownership.

At Universal Health Care Foundation, we envision a health system that is accountable and responsive to the people it serves, that supports our health, takes excellent care of all of us when we are sick, at a cost that does not threaten our financial security. We believe that health outcomes should not be affected based upon income, gender, race, language of preference, status, or geography. We support this bill because our hospitals must be accountable to Connecticut residents. Health outcomes and community well-being should also not be affected by a hospital's tax status.

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) non-profit hospitals are held accountable to their communities through community benefit programs. The change in a hospital's tax status should not rescind the hospital's responsibility to its community. Hospitals are vital institutions in their communities. They provide jobs and can positively impact community health by funding community organizations and implementing programs to address the social determinants of health.

For-profit organizations frequently emphasize profit margins over the well-being of their patients and of their communities. This bill is important because it requires that for-profit companies agree to a community benefit agreement during their Certificate of Need hearing. Utilizing this transaction to ensure community benefit is one important way to leverage the state's authority to serve communities. This requirement creates accountability between the hospital and its community. We urge you to support this bill because for-profit hospitals cannot be allowed to focus solely on profits over human lives. Thank you.

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut's mission is to serve as a catalyst that engages residents and communities in shaping a democratic health system that provides universal access to quality, affordable, equitable health care and promotes health in Connecticut. We believe that health care is a fundamental right and that our work is part of a broader movement for social and economic justice.