



Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

General Bonding Subcommittee

-March 26, 2024-

Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving us the opportunity to update you on the transformative building initiatives that you have made possible at the University of Connecticut. I'm Radenka Maric, President of the University of Connecticut, and with me today is Dr. Bruce Liang, interim CEO of UConn Health and Dean of the Medical School, Jeff Geoghegan, Chief Financial Officer for UConn and UConn Health, and David Benedict, our Athletic Director. I'm pleased to share how your strategic investments in the University's capital program have enabled our success.

I would like to start by thanking each of you for your leadership, dedication, and support. I would also like to thank the governor, Secretary Beckham, and others in the administration who continue to work closely with UConn.

UConn is a top public university because of the state's continued support and investment. Thanks to your support, UConn is currently ranked #9 among public universities by the Wall Street Journal due to our affordability, average time to degree, and the value a UConn education adds to graduates' salaries. Due in large part to continued state investment, we have received a record 57,000 applications and counting for next fall.

There is no doubt UConn is a great university. But it's even more than that, with campuses, alumni, and employees across Connecticut, it is built to inspire the global community that is UConn Nation. UConn's talented students exceed expectations. Our expert faculty researchers, staff and alumni drive Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship (CIE) for a better tomorrow. We fuel the state's economy and are committed to benefiting the greater good. This is UConn.

UConn 2000 Extension Request

It is critical that the UCONN 2000 program be replenished and extended. Only \$67 million in bond authorizations remain in the UCONN 2000 capital program for infrastructure projects on the Storrs and Regional campuses over the next three years, and the program will run out of money entirely at the end of FY27. The University is requesting that:

- \$650.5M be added to the program and phased in over the next five years; and
- The UCONN 2000 program be extended until FY29.

The funding requested will be used to update STEM infrastructure to meet workforce needs, help address deferred maintenance needs, return the Hydrogen Hub funding, renovate portions of Gampel Pavilion for our national championship basketball programs, and upgrade the Field House and other athletic facilities to address Title IX inequities.

We were very encouraged that the Governor provided \$90.5 million in his budget to get many of these projects started which we believe is representative of his commitment to provide the University with

the state-of-the-art facilities our students and faculty need to continue to excel. **We would like to work with the Governor and the General Assembly to phase in our entire \$650.5 million request over the next five years, authorize the funding in the UCONN 2000 program, and extend the program until FY29 as follows:**

New Projects (\$M)	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	Total
New Science 2 + Torrey Demo	\$5.0	\$16.0	\$68.5	\$130.5	\$100.0	\$320.0
Gant-Code Repairs & Renovations	20.0	55.0	25.0			100.0
Deferred Maintenance	23.0	15.0				50.0
Return Hydrogen Hub Funds	12.0					12.0
Gampel Renovations	15.0	55.0	30.0			100.0
Field House Renovation (Title IX + DM)	50.0	10.0				60.0
Coventry Boathouse (Title IX)	0.8					0.8
Freitas Renovation (Title IX)			5.5	1.5		7.0
Tennis Facility (Title IX)	0.7					0.7
New Project Total	\$126.5	\$151.0	\$141.0	\$132.0	\$100.0	\$650.5
Existing UCONN 2000 Funding	44.0	14.0	9.0			67.0
Revised UCONN 2000 Funding	\$170.5	\$165.0	\$150.0	\$132.0	\$100.0	\$717.5

Authorizing Funding in UCONN 2000 is Essential

The University runs six campuses spanning 4,284 acres with 18 million square feet of facilities. Our campuses are open 365 days a year, servicing more than 42,000 students, faculty, and staff daily, in addition to visitors and patients. The Storrs and UConn Health campuses are essentially small cities that local towns rely upon for infrastructure support. To manage our dynamic and active campuses, we need sufficient, reliable funding to do long-term master planning and the flexibility to address emergency infrastructure and facility needs of a 24/7 operation. Additionally, as a major public research institution, we need to be able to plan, design, renovate, and construct facilities with minimal disruption to our academic enterprise and student activities. For the past 29 years, the UCONN 2000 program has given us these capabilities. Why deviate from a successful model now?

Before UCONN 2000

It is important to remember how the University was maintained prior to UCONN 2000. Decisions about UConn facilities were not made locally by people managing our campuses but by state agency officials in Hartford who had to balance other priorities and considerations when determining levels of funding and when it would be awarded. Bond authorization decisions were made on an annual basis, and the allocation of funding was made by the Bond Commission. Bond authorizations passed by the General Assembly, of course, did not guarantee funding was ever allocated by the Bond Commission. As a result, UConn campuses were in crisis and most buildings needed major upgrades and renovations. The Stamford, Waterbury, and West Hartford campuses were small and far from their current downtown

locations, enrolled fewer students, and needed completely new facilities. Connecticut's best and most diverse students went elsewhere for their college experiences, contributing to our state's brain drain. The ability to do long-term planning and implement construction and renovation projects on a schedule conducive to learning, teaching, research, and patient care was non-existent.

A good example of the inefficiency of the Bond Commission process is the history of Babbidge Library on the Storrs campus. In the early 80's, the newly constructed library was suffering from severe structural issues, sagging floors, a crumbling exterior façade, and walls separating from pillars. For life safety reasons, the building had to be wrapped in plastic, scaffolding and fencing was erected, entrances were closed, and books were relocated. For an entire decade – between 1985 and 1995 -- this library languished in a state of disrepair. Finally, in 1996, 15+ years after the initial problems were identified, the Bond Commission approved funding for a major overhaul and upgrade.

Another example is the Innovation Partnership Building (IPB) which was done through the Bond Commission process. The project was bid in the Fall 2014. The approval to proceed into construction was sought from the State Bonding Commission in December 2014, but the State Bonding Commission delayed their review and approval until May 2015. In order to proceed with the project after receiving approval, the University had to pay the escalation in construction cost during the 6-month delay period, which totaled \$644,337.

In contrast, through UCONN 2000, the University is able to respond to campus needs in a much timelier way. In September 2020, a Housing Master Plan was completed, which identified a strong demand for more on-campus housing that is proven to result in stronger student success outcomes (i.e., retention and graduation rates). By December 2020, the Board approved a planning budget for the new South Campus Residence Hall project. Construction began in August 2022 and will be complete by August 2024. In just four years, the University identified a need and executed a project due to the flexibility of the UCONN 2000 program.

Thanks to the program today UConn's campuses are vibrant and thriving with strong enrollments. The University is a top choice for Connecticut students, and it continues to climb in the national rankings. By every measure, the UCONN 2000 program is a resounding success, and it just makes sense to continue and expand it.

Incredible Return on Investment

The UCONN 2000 program is one of the most successful programs in state history. The program has and continues to modernize, rehabilitate, and dramatically expand the physical plant of the University. It is a major tool in attracting and retaining the state's high-achieving students and world-class faculty, researchers, and staff.

Since the beginning of UCONN 2000, we have seen improvements in nearly every facet of the University. The return on that investment can be measured by many metrics; here are some highlights:

UConn

- UConn is currently ranked #9 among public universities by the Wall Street Journal due to our affordability, average time to degree – which is the best in the nation – and the value a UConn education adds to graduates' salaries.

- Undergraduate applications have reached nearly 57,000 for next fall.
- Undergraduate enrollment increased by 11,828 students (88%) since 1995 when UCONN 2000 began.
- Undergraduate STEM enrollment has increased by 41% since 2013.
- UConn produces 53% of the Engineering degrees for the state.
- UConn contributes \$7.8 billion to the state's economy.
- For '22 – '23 graduates, 75% of employed in-state graduates are working in Connecticut; top employers for UConn grads include Pratt & Whitney, Travelers, CVS Health/Aetna, Cigna, The Hartford, Hartford Healthcare and Amazon.

UConn Health

- Served as the catalyst to the expansion of the bioscience industry.
- Medicine and Dental Medicine enrollment increased by 30%.
- Increased access to patient care and achieved unprecedented clinical revenue growth from \$356M in FY13 to more than \$895M in FY24.

University Wide

- Research awards have grown from \$266M to \$322M over the past five years.
- 160 new start-up businesses since 2003; in FY23, the incubator space hosted 59 start-ups and created 381 jobs.
- UCONN 2000 bonds have high ratings which saves the state money.

Robust Oversight

The program has a proven structure, rigorous oversight, and annual approval processes. Specifically, the state law contains the following provisions:

- A set list (10a-109e) of building, renovation and infrastructure projects to which the University is limited.
- Annual bond authorization limits (10a-109g) that allow the state to plan bond expenditures.
- The Governor has the authority (10a-109f) annually to approve or deny the University's request to allocate bonds against its yearly statutory bond authorization limits (10a-109g).
- Annual audits (10a-109z, 10a-109aa) are required – and no material issues have been cited in the past decade.
- Regular reporting (10a-109x, 10a-109y) to the Legislature and OPM.

New Projects Requested

Below is detailed information about the projects we are requesting and why they would be transformative for the University.

STEM Infrastructure

Connecticut has tremendous workforce needs in the STEM fields, with a shortage of 6,000 workers annually in manufacturing, 7,000 workers annually in healthcare, and 5,000 workers in the next five years in the life sciences. To address these needs, UConn is requesting \$420 million, as outlined below. These projects will address the needs of current and future STEM enrollment in all biology

fields, health professions, and select engineering programs. The creation of state-of-the-art labs will support increased grant activity, especially federal funding from NIH and NSF for multidisciplinary research that connects the basic biological sciences and health science. UConn commits to increasing student capacity and increasing research awards to \$500M annually by 2030.

Torrey Demo & New Science Facility - \$320.0M

A team of architects and engineers have recommended the demolition of the circa 1961 Torrey Life Sciences Building and Greenhouses on the Storrs Campus. Physical constraints and repair costs do not support a renovation project. The building also has code and ADA compliance issues, and it does not meet current energy codes or support campus and state sustainability goals. Therefore, UConn proposes the demolition of Torrey and the construction of a new Science 2 Building. It is estimated that the new building could be approximately 175,000 to 200,000 gross square feet and sited in the Northwest Science Quad near the Science 1 Building (as depicted in the 2015 Campus Master Plan). Architect selection, planning, design, and bidding will take approximately 2-3 years, and construction will take approximately 2.5 years.

Gant - Code Repairs & Renovations (Phase III) - \$100.0M

Renovations to the Gant Science complex are required to accommodate current and future University needs in response to growing student enrollment in STEM programs. These improvements will include classrooms, lecture halls, teaching and research laboratories, faculty offices, and support spaces. Phases I and II are complete. Phase III will focus on the North Wing, which is currently vacant due to air quality issues that prevent the wing from being occupied. The goal is to renovate approximately 100,000 square feet and have a student-centered active learning environment and consolidated teaching center to foster team-based learning, support the transition of pedagogy and shared support facilities.

Deferred Maintenance - \$50M

The University of Connecticut has a \$1.2B need for capital reinvestment over the next 10 years. Deferred maintenance efforts to preserve assets and keep building functions intact will require a significant investment in all our campus locations. To help accomplish this, we are asking for \$50M. This includes projects related to the water and sewer system, utility support, life safety systems for multiple residential halls, building repairs at the Avery Point and Stamford campuses, and chiller replacements needed at the Stamford and Waterbury campuses. Additional DM funds will be needed in the future as we continue to evaluate needed maintenance at all campus locations.

Athletics - \$168.5M

UConn requires top-notch performance and practice facilities to continue its national dominance in collegiate sports, which has resulted in 23 national championships. As in the past, investment in athletics will reap economic benefits for the entire state. For example, in FY23 alone, UConn Athletics operations and visitor spending generated \$226.2 million of economic impact with \$35.4 million in state and local taxes, and 1,732 jobs.

Gampel Renovation - \$100M

Constructed in 1990 – Gampel is the home of our National Championship Men’s and Women’s basketball teams. It requires significant upgrades to keep our basketball programs nationally competitive and remain the “Basketball Capital of the World.”

The overall renovation includes updates to enhance revenue-generating opportunities within the facility, including scoreboards, concessions areas, upgrading lower-level seating to reflect a model more comparable to our peers, and reimagining areas of the building to increase capacity for donor cultivation space which is extremely limited now.

The new donor cultivation space would also double as a student-athlete dining facility that would be used 365 days a year and address Title IX equity issues. Currently, 126 male student-athletes (Football, Men’s Basketball) and 15 female student-athletes (Women’s Basketball) benefit from ‘team only’ dining facilities. Comparable dining facilities, including food preparation capabilities, should be made available to additional student-athletes, specifically females. The goal is that this space would also be available as a high-end function space for donors during the basketball season and other special events.

All told, athletics expects these renovations to yield \$2.5M in additional revenue annually while providing a better in-game experience to our fans and enhancing the support services for hundreds of student-athletes.

Finally, this investment would also allow for the expansion of the very successful Korey Stringer Institute, housed in Gampel Pavilion, which provides research, education, advocacy, and consultation to maximize performance, optimize safety, and prevent sudden death for the athlete, warfighter, and laborer.

Athletics Title IX Needs: To maintain compliance with Title IX regulatory requirements, and with guidance from our Title IX monitors, we are requesting \$168.5M in total bond funding for Athletics investment. Athletics has also committed to fundraising \$34.5M in support of these needs.

- Field House Renovation (Title IX + DM) - \$60.0M Renovation of team locker rooms and meeting rooms so they are comparable to spaces within the Rizza Performance Center. Teams impacted include Women’s Cross Country, Field Hockey, Women’s Rowing, Women’s Swimming & Diving, Women’s Tennis, Men’s and Women’s Track & Field, and Men’s Golf. Additionally, updates are needed to ensure equity in space, access, and aesthetics to Wolff-Zackin Natatorium, Strength & Conditioning, and Sports Medicine facilities in Greer Field House. Student-athletes who utilize the Field House must have the necessary training and medical equipment to adequately prepare and receive treatment for their specific sports.
- Coventry Boathouse (Title IX) - \$0.8M Renovation of the Women’s Rowing boathouse to meet the specifications noted in the Lazor v. UConn settlement.
- Freitas Renovation (Title IX) - \$7.0M Renovation of the Freitas Ice Forum facility to support the Women’s Volleyball program. This phase of renovations will enclose the championship

court with permanent bleachers, a divider between the practice and playing surfaces, and a new video board. It will also provide off-court access to the public for restrooms. In addition, it will fully secure the back-of-house spaces for team meetings and meals, as well as enlarge the athletic medicine/rehabilitation space and provide necessary athletic administrative offices that will support multiple athletic programs in the athletic district.

- Tennis Facility (Title IX) - \$0.7M Installation of fully functional and permanent restrooms for both student-athletes and spectators at the outdoor Tennis Courts. In addition, the tennis courts will be inspected for reported cracking and/or bubbling, and repairs/replacements will be made to address any confirmed concerns.

Conclusion

The UCONN 2000 program is essential to the University's future and has a proven 29-year track record of success. Now is not the time to change course and revert to a model where decisions about the University's facilities are not made locally. Long-term, reliable funding is necessary to ensure the University plans strategically to meet student, patient, academic, and research needs and has the flexibility to respond quickly when emergencies occur.