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CHA and Hospitals to Testify Before the Planning and Development Committee

WALLINGFORD – The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) and Connecticut hospitals will testify before the General Assembly’s Planning and Development Committee during a public hearing on Wednesday, March 11, 2015, on **HB 6965, *An Act Concerning The Preservation Of Municipal Tax Bases***. CHA and hospitals will oppose this bill, which would allow municipalities to tax not-for-profit hospitals and colleges. If passed into law, Connecticut would be the only state in the nation to levy property tax on not-for-profit hospitals and colleges.

Connecticut, like the rest of the nation, enacted the property tax exemption for hospitals many years ago in recognition of the unique and critically important role hospitals play in their communities. Connecticut hospitals treat everyone who comes through their doors 24 hours a day, regardless of ability to pay. In 2013, Connecticut hospitals provided nearly \$218 million in free services for those who could not afford to pay. They also incurred \$1.1 billion in losses due to Medicare and Medicaid paying hospitals less than the cost of caring for patients on those programs.

Not only do Connecticut hospitals care for the sick, but they also play a major and continually expanding role in improving community health. In 2013, Connecticut hospitals invested \$1.5 billion in community benefit initiatives.

Connecticut hospitals epitomize the reason that the property tax exemption was created. The commitment of Connecticut hospitals to their communities has not wavered, even while the financial burdens imposed on hospitals by the state have grown increasingly unbearable.

HB 6965 would place yet another tax on hospitals. The financial burden of paying property taxes to local governments, coupled with the adverse impacts of both state funding cuts and the hospital tax, threaten the ability of hospitals to maintain community benefits at their current levels, and affect access and services for all patients.

Connecticut hospitals will urge legislators not to impose another tax on not-for-profit hospitals.

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About CHA

The Connecticut Hospital Association has been dedicated to serving Connecticut’s hospitals since 1919. Through state and federal advocacy, CHA represents the interests of Connecticut’s hospitals on key healthcare issues in the areas of quality and patient safety, access and coverage, workforce, community health, health equity, and hospital reimbursement.