**TESTIMONY OF
PATRICK J. MONAHAN II
GENERAL COUNSEL AND VICE PRESIDENT,
PATIENT CARE REGULATION
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
BEFORE THE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 15, 2006**

**HB 5007, An Act Making Adjustments To The Budget For The
Biennium Ending June 30, 2007**

My name is Pat Monahan and I am General Counsel and Vice President, Patient Care Regulation of the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA). I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of CHA and its members concerning **HB 5007, an Act Making Adjustments to the Budget for the Biennium ending June 30, 2007**.

While CHA is supportive of the continued funding in the Governor's proposed budget for certain mental health and supportive housing initiatives administered by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), CHA is concerned that the Governor's proposed budget, including the proposals specific to DMHAS, did not make critical investments in hospitals to improve the delivery of mental health care in this state. CHA also was disappointed to see that the DMHAS budget eliminates $600,000 in funding for General Assistance Enhanced Care Clinics and $510,000 in funding for Partial Hospital Programs under the General Assistance Behavioral Health Program.

CHA opposes these types of cuts in funding for mental health programs. CHA urges consideration of funding for recommendations that continue to be advanced by the Lieutenant Governor's Mental Health Cabinet, increased funding to ensure adequate payment for mental health services, a budget provision that requires the Behavioral Health Partnership to provide for annual adjustments to all hospital rates at least equal to the average increase granted during the fiscal year by the Department of Public Social Services to HUSKY managed care organizations, and a commitment of resources that ensures proper placement of patients in need of mental health treatment and reduces the number of patients waiting in hospital emergency departments for mental health services.

PJM:pas