

**UConn President Susan Herbst's Report  
UConn Board of Trustees – Sept. 27, 2017  
As Prepared**

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The last 10 days have been interesting for us at UConn, to say the least.

By now you are all well aware of the budget that was approved by the General Assembly earlier this month and what its impact on UConn would have been.

And we don't know what the next version will bring.

Let me make 4 points:

- 1) There is a belief in some quarters that we will not make major cuts, such as closing colleges or campuses, in the face of massive state budget cuts. We have and we will. As you recall, we – and it was hard on us and the community – closed the Torrington campus. We have closed colleges and eliminated dean positions in recent years: The College of Continuing Studies, the College of Allied Health, the College of Family Studies. I ask that folks listen to what we say and watch the hard things we've done in the past to cut budgets. They are not pleasant actions, but we take them when we are left with no other realistic choice.
- 2) On the one hand, we are told we must absorb massive cuts, but are then told by some that we may not cut anything significant. Or anything people like or care about. But everything is important to someone. There is no low-hanging fruit or mythical fat adding up to \$300 million, or even a small fraction of that, that could easily go.

We could zero out the salary of every single senior administrator and it would be a tiny fraction of our overall budget and barely make a dent in a \$300 million reduction. So let's get some perspective with the facts.

- 3) Speaking of facts. I've been a social scientist for over 30 years, and in my work, I focus on quantitative measurement, data analysis and interpretation. There's some very poor and woefully distorted data out there in very pretty charts on the Internet. Don't be fooled, as hard as this is to read through.

For example, of course a university's expenditures go up over years, when they expand their enrollment by the thousands.

And they go up because we must support advanced computing, modern educational resources, new facilities, mental health services, sexual assault prevention, legal compliance, and not to mention, actually making undergraduate education better.

There's no free lunch for a comprehensive public university, one where the state has in fact chartered us to be comprehensive. We are glad serve our students and the state. We do it well – we are 18<sup>th</sup> public research university out of hundreds, not 50 – and we do it efficiently.

- 4) I urge all of our folks to please continue keeping the discourse – online and in print – civil. I thank you for that, USG and our tremendous faculty and staff. Even if there are ad hominem approaches taken by others off campus, we don't go low. The funding and support of UCONN is a public policy matter for our students and state; it's not about me or anyone else.

I want to thank our students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, donors and others supporters for speaking up for UConn.

We will wait and see what the new budget looks like.