



State of Connecticut

SENATOR LEONARD A. FASANO
SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

34TH DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
300 CAPITOL AVENUE, SUITE 3400
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591
www.SenatorFasano.com

HARTFORD: (860) 240-8800
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1421
FAX: (860) 240-8306
Len.Fasano@cga.ct.gov

July 31, 2019

Dr. Thomas C. Katsouleas
University of Connecticut
Office of the President
352 Mansfield Road, Unit 1048
Storrs, CT 06269-1048

Dear President Katsouleas:

I am writing in regard to the University of Connecticut's departure from the American Athletic Conference and the separation agreement announced last week.

Based on documents provided to my office by UConn, the exit fee to be paid to the AAC totals \$17 million and the Big East entrance fee will be \$3.5 million, resulting in a total cost of \$20.5 million. In addition, a chart was provided that shows some reduced travel expenses and estimates for increased ticket sales, but also reduced conference distributions.

In documents shared with my office, it was stated that, "No state appropriated funds or tuition dollars will be used to pay the AAC exit fee. Instead, a portion of revenue from UConn's non-academic revenue generating activities such as athletics, non-degree programs, housing, dining, parking, and real estate may be used for the AAC exit fee."

While I appreciate the effort to protect certain funds from being used for this expense, I remain very concerned about pushing these costs onto students. As UConn stated, this will be paid for using revenue collected from students for things like housing and meals. If you have extra money in this non-academic revenue fund, it begs the question: are we overcharging students for these expenses? And if additional money exists, why does UConn continue to ask the state for more taxpayer funding year after year to cover growing expenses such as fringe benefit costs?

I believe that it would be most appropriate to pay for UConn's exit and entrance fee using funds from the UConn Foundation. The UConn Foundation is benefited by being able to use the UConn brand, logo, and image to fundraise. The Foundation will be a third party beneficiary to this new agreement and they should help offset cost. The \$20.5 million should not be wholly borne by the students of UConn.


Dr. Thomas C. Katsouleas
July 31, 2019
Page 2

As you are aware, the UConn Foundation has previously paid for a variety of expenses including many which have been called into question, such as extremely expensive guest speakers, trips for the former governor and homes for UConn presidents. I believe this investment would be far more beneficial to the UConn Foundation than many of those past investments.

In summary, I believe AAC departure expenses should not be shouldered by students or taxpayers. Money that students pay to UConn, whether it be for tuition, meals, housing or any other service, should not be misdirected. The UConn Foundation is a far more appropriate source to cover the costs of the Big East transition.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Len Fasano', with a large flourish extending to the right.

Len Fasano
Senate Republican Leader

cc: David Benedict, Director of Athletics