

August 4, 2021

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Andrew Agwunobi, MD, MBA
Interim President | University of Connecticut
EVP for Health Affairs and Chief Executive Officer | UConn Health



RE: Renaming of The Thomas J. Dodd Research Center to The Dodd Center for Human Rights

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees authorize the renaming of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center building to The Dodd Center for Human Rights.

BACKGROUND:

In early 1990s, Senator Christopher J. Dodd worked to conceive, fund, and build a state-of-the-art archival and research facility on the UConn Storrs Campus. Dedicated in 1995 in honor of his father, the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center honored the life and human rights legacy of the former Nuremberg prosecutor and U.S. Senator.

Today, Senator Chris Dodd remains a stalwart champion of and advocate for the University and its human rights efforts, and has created, along with his wife Jackie Clegg, the Dodd Endowment to support this work. The renaming of the building as The Dodd Center for Human Rights will serve to recognize both generations' careers in public service and dedication to human rights.

Over the past 25 years, the building has become a center not only of archival research, but also of the University's world-class human rights academic, research, and outreach programs. Through this rededication, the University has the opportunity to emphasize the human rights focus of the Center's founding and ongoing mission. The Dodd Center for Human Rights will serve as an umbrella home for the University's rich and diverse human rights programs, including the Human Rights Institute (HRI) and Dodd Impact, which was recently created with the support of Senator Dodd to foster a culture of human rights at UConn, in Connecticut and around the world. Within HRI, Dodd Impact serves as the outreach and external face of human rights at UConn, weaving the interdisciplinary academic programs with action and practice. In pursuing this mission, The Dodd Center and Dodd Impact will be supported by an external Advisory Board, whose members will provide advice, counsel, and assistance.

In addition to its human rights focus, the Dodd Center will continue to house the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life and the University Libraries' Archives and Special Collection, further underscoring the dynamic, multidisciplinary nature of the space. These programs are key participants and partners for the human rights mission of the Dodd Center, including rich histories that are intertwined with the legacies of Senators Thomas J. Dodd and Christopher J. Dodd.

Like his father, Senator Christopher J. Dodd dedicated his life to serving the people of Connecticut and to defending the fundamental rights and freedoms in the US and around the world. From his earliest days in the Senate, when he worked to end the worst abuses of human rights in Nicaragua and El Salvador, to the essential role he played in achieving peace in Northern Ireland, Chris Dodd was a consistent voice for the values of human rights around the world. At the same time, Senator Dodd worked to make the promise of human rights real for all Americans. In particular, he focused on ensuring all children have the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive, playing an essential role in the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act, the establishment of the Children's Health Insurance Program, and defending and extending Head Start. In his final years in the Senate, Senator Dodd's leadership was critical to the drafting and adoption of the Dodd-Frank Act and the Affordable Care Act, both of which are essential foundations for protecting the wellbeing and health of millions of Americans.

At its July 28, 2021, meeting, the Institutional Advancement Committee recommended approval to the full Board.