



State of Connecticut
Department of Higher Education

Testimony by
Michael P. Meotti, Commissioner of Higher Education
before the
Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee
February 3, 2009

Good afternoon Chairman Looney, Chairman Janowski, members of the Committee. For the record, I am Michael P. Meotti, Commissioner of Higher Education, and I am pleased to be considered as a member of the Connecticut delegation to the New England Board of Higher Education.

Although I am a little less than a year into my current position at the Department, I have been long familiar with the valuable work of NEBHE. First and foremost, NEBHE serves Connecticut students through its Tuition Break program, known formally as the New England Regional Student Program. All 82 New England public colleges and universities participate in the RSP Tuition Break which enables thousands of New England residents to attend out-of-state New England public colleges and universities at a discount. Students are eligible for the Tuition Break discount when they enroll in a major that is not offered by a public college in their own state.

Through Tuition Break, Connecticut students can choose among 300 majors not available within our state. More than 1,200 Connecticut students elected to participate last year for an average savings of \$7,000. In all, the program saved Connecticut residents \$7.7 million, and brought \$9.6 million in tuition revenue into the state from students from other states. Without question, Tuition Break is a good deal for Connecticut students and for our State.

NEBHE serves Connecticut in a myriad of equally important but perhaps less visible ways. It provides a platform for regional cooperation between New England's higher education agencies, enabling our respective organizations to promote and share policies, programs and best practices.

NEBHE performs a valuable service to Connecticut. I would be honored to join Connecticut's delegation on their Board of Directors. Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have for me.