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Good afternoon, Senator Looney and Representative Janowski, members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. It is my honor to once again appear before this committee to discuss the Connecticut State University System. I would also like to express my gratitude to Governor Rell for re-nominating me. I am deeply grateful to the governor for the confidence she has placed in me.

During the past nine years, I have had the honor and pleasure to serve our state as a Trustee of the Connecticut State University System. During that time we made a great deal of progress in improving our system. If it's been a while since you visited Eastern, Western, Southern, or Central, the first thing you might notice is the campuses have changed. No longer are they the flat roofed, inefficient buildings of the 60's and 70's. Today our campuses are inviting, state of the art facilities that demonstrate confidence to students and parents looking to us as a potential educational provider. With CSUS 2020 the infrastructure of our system will continue to improve for those attending in the future. Today, these improvements to our campuses will create jobs both for construction and the supply of goods and services in support of that construction. But the look and feel of our physical plant is only the beginning. From assisting students who require additional math or writing skill to articulation agreements with the community and technical colleges, we have tried to improve the path to graduation. For many, the path is uncharted as nearly half of all who attend our universities are the first in their families to attend college. And these students are Connecticut's own as

93 percent come from our state, representing all 169 cities and towns. But attending a CSUS university isn't the end of the story because nearly 90 percent of the students remain in Connecticut after graduation. This helps Connecticut's economic, civic, and cultural vitality. It also makes our state attractive to employers seeking an educated work force. I believe an investment in higher education is an investment Connecticut's future. As the dynamics of our economy rapidly change, one thing is for sure. The demand for those possessing critical thinking as well as technical expertise will only increase. That's why we are trying to anticipate the needs of the future and create a culture within our university system where the best and brightest want to live and work in Connecticut. We can't continue to improve the educational experience for our students if we can't attract and retain the best educators. I would like CSUS to be the system where top talent wants to work and the place where their efforts will make a difference to all citizens of Connecticut.

The economic environment facing Connecticut as well as the rest of the nation will likely test our resolve in providing accessibility, affordability, and excellence. In my view we shouldn't waiver on any of our principals. To do so would cause long to damage to our state. Business downturns come and recoveries follow. But business downturns give us an opportunity to reassess and look for opportunities. Opportunities to cut waste, develop more efficient procedures, take advantage of technology, and make plans to capitalize on the opportunities the recovery will surely bring. I m aware of the pain the current downturn has

caused many families, but I m equally aware that those with a four year degree lose their employment at a rate far less often that those without a degree. That's one of the many reasons I spend my volunteer time in higher education.

Education can make all the difference in the life of a family and society at large.

In summary, we have made a great deal of progress at CSUS, but the current downturn threatens to derail some of that progress. I feel this time is critical as more students may look to us and the ability to accommodate them may be limited. But challenges can be viewed as negatives or positives and I choose to find the positives. So respectfully I ask that you allow me another six years to help move higher education forward in our great state.

I appreciate your attention and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have for me. Thank you.