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TO: Governor M. Jodi Rell  
 President Pro Tem Donald Williams  
 Speaker Christopher Donovan  
 Senator Mary Ann Handley  
 Representative Roberta Willis  
 Senator Toni Harp  
 Representative John Geragosian

FROM: Judith B. Greiman, President  
 RE: Deficit Mitigation Recommendation to Cut Connecticut Independent Colleges Student Grant Program  
 Date: December 4, 2009

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I am writing to provide information about the Connecticut Independent College Student Grant program (CICS) and to request that you leave intact the CICS funding for this year. The recently released Deficit Mitigation Plan includes the recommendation that \$1,170,693 be cut from the program.

*A cut of this magnitude would be difficult for our students at any time. At this time of great need and, in particular at this time of year, it would also be impossible since all of the CICS money has already been given out. Asking students to repay some of this grant money would be a logistical nightmare and, more importantly, would cause great hardship at this late date in the academic year to students who are already barely able to pay their college costs. Quite frankly, I just don't know where they would come up with the money.*

*Connecticut's CICS and CAPCS grant programs go a long way toward helping Connecticut students who lack resources go to the college or university of their choice in their home state. These grants are pieces of the college funding puzzle for students who must patch together family, college-provided, federal and state aid to pay their college expenses.*

*Recently released data show that Connecticut students graduate with the third highest debt level in the nation. State and federal need-based grants coupled with college provided aid are the key tools needed to bring down this debt number. Due to the weakened economy, more students are eligible for need-based aid because of family job loss, investment loss or lowered income. CCIC member colleges and universities have stepped up to this challenge. They provide almost \$500 million in institutional aid and all increased aid in the last year to help students who are coping with the economic downturn even as campuses struggled with reduced revenues from other sources.*

*Economists and public policy makers all agree that job growth will be a critical component of Connecticut's economic recovery. Such growth will not occur, however, without the highly educated workforce for which we have become famous. Need-based aid makes a significant impact in ensuring that we have this educated workforce. We urge you to resist efforts to cut this vital program.*

Albertus Magnus College, Connecticut College, Fairfield University, Goodwin College,  
 Mitchell College, Quinnipiac University, Rensselaer at Hartford, Sacred Heart University, Saint Joseph College, St. Vincent's College,  
 Trinity College, University of Bridgeport, University of Hartford, University of New Haven, Wesleyan University, Yale University



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## Key Facts about Connecticut's Independent Higher Education Sector

- We are collectively the third largest employer in the State (over 22,000 FTE), provide cultural, athletic and educational opportunities for residents of our surrounding areas, educate Connecticut residents and draw out of state and international students to the region.
- We consistently award just under half of the total degrees in Connecticut including more than half of the four-year and above degrees given to minority students and more than half the degrees given in key economic cluster areas.
- We have close ties to the business and research communities and graduate, among others, allied health workers, teachers and engineers who participate in Connecticut's economy.
- Overall, we also have higher graduation rates than the public sectors.

## Need-Based Aid Facts

- Pell Grant recipients at CCIC member schools increased by 41% from 97-07 when total enrollment increased by only 8%.
- The CICS grant program provides need-based aid to Connecticut undergraduates attending Connecticut independent colleges.
- CICS awards went to 5,816 students in FY 2009 at an average grant of \$4,030. The current \$23,913,860 allocation meets only 78% of the need. From FY 90-09, funding increased by only 25% in constant dollars.
- The average CICS grant is \$10,036 less than state support per UCONN student saving the state expenses that would be incurred if the same student attended a public college. ***Additionally, the State cost per degree (FY 2006) in the independent sector was \$929 compared to \$54,603 in the public sector.***
- Independent colleges provide over \$457 million annually in private and institutional financial aid funds to Connecticut undergraduates.
- 74% of students at independent colleges in Connecticut receive financial aid with an average award per student of \$23,254.

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