



University of Connecticut
Department of Public Policy

January 27, 2010

Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee
Room 1000
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Ms. Janowski, Mr. Looney, Mr. McKinney, Mr. Piscopo, and other members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee:

Bob Ross has asked us to provide a letter of recommendation in support of his nomination as Executive Director of the Office of Military Affairs, and we are pleased to do so.

We first met Bob when he began as a student in our Master of Public Administration (MPA) program in 2003. He took his graduate education very seriously, and his dedication and high personal standards made him a top student. He took full advantage of our program, pursuing a much more challenging course of study than the minimum required. As one example, he took on a very difficult capstone project that required him to learn and use data envelopment analysis, which is a complex methodology. He made the extra effort to do a careful, thorough analysis and to produce an excellent paper, rather than one that would have been "good enough."

Beyond his academic success, Bob drew upon his substantial public service background to share a wealth of "real world" insight with his younger graduate student colleagues. He appreciably enriched the classes in which he participated as a result—and he has continued to contribute to our Department in valuable ways since his graduation. In particular, he has been an engaged alumnus and active member of the MPA Alumni Council. We regularly seek input from this council to help us understand how well we are serving the needs of public sector employers and keep our curriculum robust and relevant. Time and again, Bob offers useful, actionable feedback about ways to strengthen the department. He readily mentors current students and shares career ideas and opportunities with them. His selection by fellow alumni as the 2008 Distinguished Alumnus is a testament to his stature as a public servant and his contribution to our Department.

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Bob has also supported the department as a popular guest lecturer capable of explaining complex concepts to a variety of audiences. Last spring he guest lectured about data envelopment analysis to a group of graduate students in public policy. He did a great job of translating his methodology into an explanation that anyone could readily understand, and of making it interesting and relevant to issues the students care about. The host faculty member remarked, "The students loved him. He related efficiency improvements in government to management decisions about airport screening. He really helped them see why the technique was valuable." Bob also stepped in as an adjunct faculty member to teach a graduate-level strategic management course for us at the last minute, when another person suddenly withdrew. Even with only a few days to prepare, Bob put together a great course.

Bob's strong public service record, high standards, work ethic, and deep concern for his community all make it easy for us to commend him to you enthusiastically. Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Amy K. Donahue
Department Head



Mark D. Robbins
Associate Professor



William Simonsen
Graduate Director