

February 8, 2010

Mary Ann Handley, Senate Chair
Roberta Willis, House Chair
Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement

Dear Committee Members:

My name is David Walsh, and I am president of the Connecticut State University chapter of the American Association of University Professors. Our union represents 3200 teaching faculty members, librarians, coaches and counselor at CCSU, ECSU, SCSU and WCSU universities. I am here today to urge passage of Raised Bill 5024 which would authorize Connecticut State University to offer an Ed.D Program in Nursing Education, not solely for the purpose of preparing personnel for the public schools of the state.

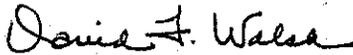
At a time, when the attention of the General Assembly and the people of Connecticut are focused on the budget deficit and acute concern for the future of the state, the value of public higher education is most evident. As the members of the General Assembly know better than anyone, the level of concern for state spending and for the economic future of Connecticut is at an all time high. We in the AAUP have always believed that public higher education must be a major part of the solution to the state's economic difficulties. Accessible education, which for most families means public higher education, is the crucial vehicle for preparing our citizens for successful professional careers that will meet the workforce needs of the state now and in the future. We also believe that in these times of budgetary crisis, it is the educational product that counts, not the particular unit of higher education that offers it, as long as the educational product is of high quality.

The CSU proposal you have before you today, will benefit the state's general population as well as members of the nursing profession for whom it will be made available. It is based on the successful model adopted by the Teacher's College at Columbia University. We ask the General Assembly to consider the following points:

1. The shortage of qualified nurses statewide and at the national level has been repeatedly documented. By preparing current nurses with the training necessary to teach future nurses at the university level, a positive step will have been taken to alleviate the nursing shortage in Connecticut.
2. An Ed.D. in Nursing Education at CSU can be created and operated without the need for additional state funding. The program will utilize existing faculty, technology and space at SCSU and WCSU. As the program develops up to eight additional faculty lines will be added by 2014, if justified by increased enrollment and accompanying tuition and fees.
3. The program will be especially useful to nurses currently working in the field since it will utilize a nontraditional course delivery format, including online courses, summer, and weekend intensive courses and the availability of program directors and faculty members on a year round basis.
4. This program will build upon a solid foundation established at SCSU and WCSU at the undergraduate level and the master's levels in nursing training.

It is essential in this time of budgetary crisis that the state utilize every resource in the public sector to help to prepare the state's citizenry for high paying and sociably valuable jobs of the future. Raised Bill 5024 does exactly this.

Sincerely,



David F. Walsh
CSU-AAUP President