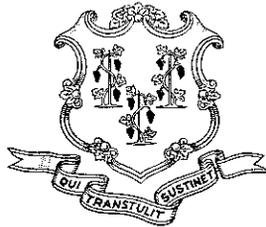


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March 4, 2010

Good Morning Senator Handley, Representative Willis and Members of
The Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

Thank you for raising HB 5368 AN ACT CONCERNING NO WORKER LEFT
BEHIND.

This legislation may be seen as the companion piece to SB 1 which
assists small businesses in job creation. HB 5368 would assist workers with the
education and training they require to fill the newly created jobs. Many of these
positions will be in knowledge-based industries and will require significant
postsecondary education and sophisticated training. These jobs tend to pay a
competitive salary and include health benefits. The bill would provide up to 2
years of free tuition at any state community college, university or other approved
training program. Once enrolled, participants need to complete a degree or

occupational certificate program within four years of starting. Tuition assistance is capped at \$5,000/yr for 2 years, or a total of \$10,000 per person. The bill will make much needed higher education affordable to many of our citizens, and legislation will assist us in adding jobs to the heretofore "jobless recovery". Connecticut must continue to regard support for quality education at all levels as a fundamental investment in our State's future. Employers will make long term commitments to our state only if they can be assured that they will find the best educated and most skilled and productive workforce here.

I look forward to working with you on this critical issue.