

To: Appropriations Committee, Connecticut General Assembly

From: Beau Anderson
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Written testimony RE: Governor's Budget Proposal for Connecticut's Community Colleges

Nearly four years ago in May 2007, I graduated from Tunxis Community College. I continued my undergraduate studies at Wesleyan University, earning my BA in Government in 2009. Currently, I am a full-time graduate student in the Department of Public Policy at UConn, and will graduate this may with two master's degrees – one in Public Administration, and one in Survey Research.

After I graduate, I will be staying in Connecticut.

I think that it is important to point this out, because it was my education at Tunxis Community College that provided a solid foundation for my future academic success. I received Connecticut Aid to Public College Students (CAPCS) grants to support my studies, and I consider them to be more than just an investment in making my college education affordable, but also an investment in the future of the State of Connecticut.

Every dollar spent on community colleges is an investment in the state's future.

The proposed reductions in support to the community college system will diminish the impact of this investment. Connecticut Community Colleges' mission is to "make educational excellence and the opportunity for lifelong learning affordable and accessible to all Connecticut citizens" and to "support the economic growth of the state and its citizens through programs that supply business and industry with a skilled, well-trained work force." This is a challenging but worthy mission.

Community colleges provide the best return on investment for the state and for students.

As a student at Tunxis, I took classes with people from all walks of life. Some of my classmates worked full-time and attended part-time, so they could get their degree and advance their career. Others were getting the training and skills they needed to start a business or find better paying work. Still others were, like me, starting at Tunxis and transferring to a 4-year institution to complete our bachelor's degrees. All of the students I know from my time at Tunxis have two things in common: 1. A desire to improve ourselves and take charge of the future and 2. Plans to stay in Connecticut.

I ask that you please support the Connecticut Community College System. Do not let the proposed reductions to community college funding stand. Our state cannot afford to make college less affordable for the people most likely to use their college education in Connecticut.

Thank you.