2/28/11

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Siobhan McDonold; I am an eighteen-year-old freshman at Connecticut College. This year, I was awarded the Connecticut Independent College Student grant of $4,500. This helped me enormously when it came to decision time on whether or not I would be attending the college. During my senior year of high school, my parents sat me down and told me very seriously that paying for college would be a huge issue for our family and that it would largely affect where I would be able to attend. I decided that I would stay in my home state Connecticut so that I would be eligible for grants such as these.

After touring and falling in love with Conn College, I decided to apply Early Decision. My parents told me that this would be risky because there was a good chance that we would not be able to afford it. I loved the college too much to not apply and therefore waited eagerly for my financial aid package. My parents told me that the amount we would be paying as a family was the absolute highest amount we could pay without going bankrupt.

As a student, I took out the maximum amount of federal loans this year. The CICS grant helped me tremendously. My parents informed me that without that grant, I most likely would not be a Conn student today. I fulfill my work-study job for nine hours a week to ensure that I can help pay for book expenses and incidental costs. My parents have sacrificed so much for me to be able to go to the school of my choice for the first year alone that it would be a shame for me to not be able to continue.

If the CICS grant is taken away, I will not be able to return to Connecticut College. I already have taken out maximum federal loans as part of my financial aid package and my parents cannot take on another $4,500. My father has been out of work for over a year and a half now and will soon no longer be eligible for unemployment payments. He has been looking for a job but has not found something yet.

Please, reconsider your decision to eliminate the Connecticut Independent College Student grant. I would love to be able to stay at Connecticut College through my senior year because it is a wonderful learning environment. Please help support my education by keeping the CICS grant and allowing me to stay at my dream college.

Thank you,

Siobhan McDonold
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