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**Testimony of the Connecticut Economic Resource Center before the
Appropriations Committee on Governor's Bill 1011, LCO No. 3604: AN ACT
CONCERNING A REORGANIZATION OF CONNECTICUT'S SYSTEM OF PUBLIC
HIGHER EDUCATION**

The Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc. (CERC) is a nonprofit company - funded primarily by utility companies - that specializes in economic development, research and marketing with a mission of making Connecticut as more competitive business environment.

We have worked successfully over the past number of years with Connecticut's Community College System and support their efforts to offer educational programs and services to build a successfully trained workforce for the future. As partners in finding solutions to address workforce and industry challenges in today's economic times, we believe that our community colleges play a critical role more than ever by serving the unemployed, underemployed and major employers of the state.

We are pleased to join with Connecticut's Community College System in its efforts to address critical components in readying and developing the workforce for employment, including:

- Building human capital and a skilled workforce by ensuring affordable access to higher education
- Partnering with business and industry to support workforce and economic development
- Supporting the state's job creation agenda by expanding career, technical and occupational academic programs
- Offsetting the loss of major employers by forging educational links to encourage entrepreneurship and small business development

CERC continues to be a close partner to achieve the outcome of improving the quality of Connecticut's workforce and ensuring a skilled and well-educated workforce for Connecticut. We look forward to continuing and strengthening our relationship through the opportunities presented through this testimony and to working closely with the system to achieve the goal of growing Connecticut's economic competitiveness.

Board Members and Utility Funding Partners

▶ *The Connecticut Light and Power Company* ▶ *The United Illuminating Company* ▶ *Yankee Gas Services Company* ▶ *Connecticut Natural Gas* ▶ *The Southern Connecticut Gas Company*
▶ *AT&T* ▶ *Aquarion Water Company* ▶ *The Connecticut Water Company* ▶ *Verizon* ▶ *Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative* ▶ *Webster Bank* ▶ *Wiggin & Dana*
▶ *Dept. of Economic and Community Development* ▶ *Dept. of Public Utility Control* ▶ *Office of Consumer Counsel* ▶ *University of Connecticut*