



*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

**To: The Honorable Beth Bye, Senate Chair  
The Honorable Roberta Willis, House Chair  
The Honorable Toni Boucher, Senate Ranking  
The Honorable Timothy LeGeyt, House Ranking  
Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee**

**From: Marc S. Herzog, Chancellor**

**Re: Higher Education and Employment Advancement Public Hearing**

***H.B. 6321, AN ACT CONCERNING A COLLEGE TRANSITION PILOT PROGRAM.***

**Date: February 17, 2011**

The Connecticut Community Colleges support ***H.B. 6321, An Act Concerning a College Transition Pilot Program.*** The pilot program that will be initiated by this legislation will be a complement to the efforts undertaken by the Community Colleges to better serve the students that enroll in developmental (remedial) education courses.

Connecticut's Community Colleges provide access to higher education for 53% of the undergraduate students enrolled in public higher education as well as the pathway to careers and continued higher education through guaranteed transfer to baccalaureate institutions. Well integrated transitions with the sectors throughout the PK-20 education continuum are essential to the success of students and to the economic development of the state.

The traditional Community College commitment to access and to meeting student needs is challenged by the dramatic growth in enrollments (37% growth in headcount – 2001-2010 and the increase in the number of younger, full-time students 86% growth in Full-time Students 2001-2010) studying at Community Colleges in recent years. The education requirements of the Information Age, the expectations of Connecticut's businesses and industries, a highly competitive job market, as well as the academic requirements for transfer and continued educational attainment challenge us to prepare students to be successful at college-level work. Our students arrive at college with the hope of improving their skills, their career opportunities, and the quality of their lives, but they also bring disadvantages that can limit their potential for success. Only by addressing the myriad obstacles that face students when they enter college, including educational deficits and socioeconomic disadvantages, can colleges effect positive change in the lives of the students they serve, improve graduation rates, and meet the needs of the State of Connecticut for an educated workforce. Additional support for these efforts, employing a preliminary pilot program and an evaluation process developed in partnership with the Departments of Higher Education and the State Department of Education will, we believe, prove to be an extremely valuable initiative.

In an economy that is knowledge based, where human capital is the key resource for economic development, and where individual growth and earning power advance in relation to educational attainment, community colleges can serve as a resource for Connecticut offering opportunity as never before. But they, in turn need resources to assess student needs, develop and deliver programs and services to meet those needs, to innovate and bring promising practices that support student success to scale.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me or the Community College Legislative Liaison, Meghan Collins Fanning: [mfanning@commnet.edu](mailto:mfanning@commnet.edu) or 860-244-7631.