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Dear Senators:

Thank you for reading my testimony. Although I plan to attend the reorganization hearing on March 10, I am not likely to make it in time to sign up for testimony because I will be teaching on that day until 1:30 p.m.

I have been teaching at CCSU since fall 2007. In that time, I have seen my students accomplish a number of amazing things. For example, one of my advisees won the Henry Barnard Award in 2010. This award is the highest academic honor given to students in the CSU System. I advise the CCSU chapter of the IABC Club (International Association of Business Communicators). Our chapter president won the IABC National Student Chapter Leader of the Year award for 2010. Our current president is a finalist to win the award in 2011. A team of students I helped to advise won the 2010 Travelers Insurance Information Technology Case Competition. This team defeated teams from a number of schools, including the University of Connecticut and the University of Minnesota. Simply put, CCSU students are stars. They are tenacious workers, and when provided proper support, they shine brightly. These bright stars will light the way to a brighter future for Connecticut.

The Governor's reorganization plan is not without merit, but it concerns me for a number of reasons. I fear that if the plan is approved in its current form, CCSU's stars will burnout. The reorganization in combination with appropriations cuts and tax increases will stress our students to a point that will lead them to discontinue their studies. The plan, in its current form, will make college more costly for students who come from middle and lower income families, will make it more difficult for students to graduate on time by reducing the number of course offerings and eliminating some programs, and limit the CSU schools' ability to plan for the long term. These factors will extinguish many of our stars and darken the path to Connecticut's future.

In particular, I am concerned about the Board of Regent's ability to move 15% from one system to another with no approval necessary from the institutions or the General Assembly. Although I understand the Governor's desire to increase system flexibility, this centralization of financial authority will create a chilling effect on campuses across the state. This will result in a decrease in the quality of higher education in Connecticut as four-year institutions, such as CCSU, will come to be seen as nothing more than four-year vocational schools. We educate people who will create jobs, not just fill them.

Administrations will not hire full-time, tenure-track faculty because of the potential loss of 15% each year. Full-time, tenure-track faculty are central to the functioning of any institution of comprehensive higher education because tenure helps to protect faculty members' intellectual independence. Our state needs students who can think rigorously. A high degree of rigor can only be achieved in an environment in which faculty and students can take part in free debate. Professors who do not have tenure are unlikely to take part in free debate because they will fear being fired. Tenured professors can work

together to develop curriculum. They are also easily found when students need to get recommendation letters. To hold a 15% threat over the four-year institutions will reduce the quality of higher education, reduce the quality of Connecticut's workforce, and further darken the path to Connecticut's future. It would be naïve to believe that administrators would not make cuts affecting the classroom. At present, CSU administrators spend a meager 28% of funds on instruction, which is the most mission critical function in the system.

If we are to believe the Governor's contention that higher education in Connecticut must change, become more efficient, and better serve the state, then the reorganization in its current form ignores the 700-pound husky in the room. Any serious consideration of reorganizing the state's system of higher education cannot ignore the University of Connecticut.

Should the state reorganize its system of higher education? Perhaps it should. Any reorganization cannot be taken seriously by Connecticut taxpayers when it ignores reorganizing the state's largest institution. Any reorganization should follow a more reasonable timeline. The Minnesota consolidation, to which the Governor refers, took place over four years. The Governor wants Connecticut's consolidation to take place in less than four months from today. Any reorganization should not reach into Connecticut's classrooms. The Governor stated that this was one of his primary goals. The proposed reorganization, however, will undoubtedly have negative impacts on Connecticut's college classrooms. Our students -- Connecticut's bright stars -- will pay higher taxes, face higher tuitions because of appropriations cuts, need more time to graduate, receive a lower quality education, become frustrated, and burnout. As a resident and taxpayer, this is not the path I want my state to choose.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Jason L. Snyder*

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