

*Written Testimony
Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee Public Hearing
March 10, 2011*

My name is Betty Benavides, and I have been on the Manchester Community College Foundation Board for at least 15 yrs; I currently serve as its secretary. In those 15 years, I have seen how much care and attention goes into every student, changing their lives for the better.

Some points I'd like to make:

- Raising money for scholarships and extra programs can be challenging since most people are under the impression that the state funds the majority of this state education and we all know this isn't true.
- Funding was not cut for K-12 and yet we spend much funding on many students getting them to the place when they are ready to take college courses - sometimes 1-1 1/2 yrs. Why are our high school graduating students that unprepared for college-level work?
- It is proposed that funding be based on graduation rates, yet many students who go to community colleges do not graduate – by choice. If that student transfers without an associate degree to a four-year state college and gets a bachelor's degree, neither school gets "credit" for that student's success.
- Megaboard for all state schools (except UConn) is not well thought out – this is supposed to save money? Most of the boards are volunteers who have great interest in their students and communities. And the added bureaucracy? Example: A company in Manchester needs a special program for training employees - we can do this the following semester - How long to go through a mega board?
- Many of our full-time professors are reaching retirement age and replacing them with part-timers would be detrimental to the departments.
- Many administrative tasks and cohesion are provided by these full-time professors that are essential for the students. Example : Our culinary arts school which is very popular and adds a very important link to the community could be lost due to retiring faculty.

Elizabeth Benavides
Secretary
Manchester Community College Foundation