



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Office of Financial and Academic Affairs
For Higher Education

Testimony
by
Jane A. Ciarleglio
Executive Director
before the
Appropriations Committee
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Good morning Chairman Harp, Chairman Walker, distinguished members of the Committee.

For the record, I am Jane Ciarleglio, Executive Director of the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss the Governor's recommended 2012-13 budget for our agency. I will keep my initial remarks brief and then be happy to respond to questions.

As you know, the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs is a new agency created by last year's higher education reorganization. Our mission is two-fold:

First, we provide consumer protection for students. We do so through the licensure and accreditation of independent colleges and universities, oversight of Connecticut's 62 private occupational schools, veterans' program approval, and student complaint resolution as required by recent federal regulations.

Second, we provide direct services to students by administering a variety of programs. These include the state's three college financial aid programs which account for 90 percent of our budget, minority student college access and retention programs, national and community service, and operation of Connecticut's Alternate Route to Certification, the state's sixth largest teacher preparation program.

Working on behalf of students by assuring them access to high quality postsecondary opportunities stands at the heart of all that we do. Like all state agencies, we have been asked to do our part in maintaining the state's fiscal discipline.

I will now turn to our reductions.

The Connecticut Independent College Student Grant Program

You will recall that legislation enacted last year – PA 11-6 – removed three for-profit colleges from this program, and called for the exemption of Yale University for FY 2012 and 2013. The CICSJ Program was funded with \$18.1 million, a reduction of 15 percent from the previous year.

For the coming fiscal year, the Governor has proposed two reductions to the CICSJ Program. First, all schools with endowments in excess of \$200 million will lose eligibility for a savings of \$3.8 million. These schools are Fairfield University, Quinnipiac University, Trinity College, Wesleyan University and Yale University.

Second, the Governor has proposed reallocating \$1 million from the CICSJ Program to support the new “Attract the Best” teaching program. This transfer represents an 8 percent reduction for the 11 schools remaining in the program. As a result of both reductions, the CICSJ Program will be funded at 54 percent of its funding formula compared to 59 percent in the original 2013 budget.

The Capitol Scholarship Program

The Capitol Scholarship Program awards grants directly to students attending both public and private colleges based on financial need as well as academic merit. Last year, this program had an original appropriation of \$8.9 million and, despite an excellent RBA review, was reduced by 50 percent along with a change in the law that prohibited new awards. You may have heard from your constituents regarding this issue; I know I heard from many of you. Some 3,378 students received grants, and award amounts averaged \$1,300. As required by the new law, awards went only to previous recipients; no new students were eligible.

The Governor’s proposed budget for next year reduces funds for this program by the unexpended 2011 carryforward amount. When the carryforward is added to the reduced appropriation, funding for 2013 will be restored to the original level. In addition, the Governor has proposed in his budget to repeal this prohibition. As a result, four classes of students will receive awards with the same amount that

funded three classes in 2012. We will make adjustments to eligibility and award levels to make sure that the largest number of students will receive awards at the highest amounts possible.

The Minority Advancement Program

Connecticut's Minority Advancement Program (MAP) is designed to provide college-readiness activities and to improve college success for persons from disadvantaged backgrounds. MAP includes three (3) distinct initiatives: the Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation Program (ConnCAP), the Community College Scholars (CCS), and University Success (USP).

We have some very successful programs supported by MAP. For example, Southern Connecticut State University conducts an intensive 5-week summer session combined with an innovative book loan program for students who are often unable to purchase textbooks for their freshman classes, certainly a potential stumbling block to success. Similarly, a MAP-funded ConnCAP program at Naugatuck Valley Community College each year has an extensive student waiting list, and boasts a 99 percent high school graduation rate and a 90 percent college matriculation rate.

The Governor's proposed budget for next year reduces funds for MAP by the unexpended 2011 carryforward amount. When the carryforward is added to the reduced appropriation, funding for 2013 will be restored to the original level.

Health and Education Initiatives

This Initiative is a competitive grant program involving the resources and expertise of four agencies: the Department of Public Health, Office for Workforce Competitiveness, the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, and our agency. Working together every grant cycle, we create a single RFP and proposal review process to award funds to projects designed to attract more people to nursing, nursing faculty, health information technology and behavioral health, among other shortage fields. This collaboration is an example of smart public policy as it makes the best use of diminishing state and federal funds, and avoids duplication of similar programs operated by separate agencies.

Over the years, this Initiative has supported 36 projects, all involving a higher education partner. These activities include bridge programs to help LPNs advance to RNs, health certification training for unemployed workers, and programs to attract more Spanish-speaking persons into nursing. This year we were very excited to fund a Health Information Management Pathway Grant to five colleges – Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Norwalk Community College, Capital Community College, Charter Oak State College, and Eastern Connecticut State University – to train current health and information technology professionals in this growing field.

The Governor's budget recommends removing funds for this Initiative from the 2013 budget. Funding for the remainder of this year will be preserved to complete the current information technology project and expand St. Vincent's College Minority Outreach and Student Retention and Success Program. No new projects, however, will be supported.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about any of the budget proposals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.