

**Testimony for the Appropriations Committee**

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Wesleyan University applauds the Governor's emphasis on education as a long-term investment in Connecticut's economic and cultural future. He has challenged the legislature, civic institutions and all citizens to think harder about how we can support effective instruction at all levels and for all communities. Given this important work, I was disheartened to read of the administration's proposal to cut support of the CICS Scholarship Grant even further. I ask you to reconsider these cuts, which undermine the Governor's other investments in education.

As you know, at Wesleyan University our student body comes to Connecticut from all over the world, and every year we welcome over 200 Connecticut residents into this diverse mix. Many of these students need financial aid, and though the number of students on aid has increased significantly over the last few years, our CICS Grant dollars have fallen 30% over our allocation from two years ago. Recent CICS Grant funding level as Wesleyan:

2009-10	\$435,765
2010-11	\$397,430
2011-12	\$306,489

We continue to make a significant commitment to educating Connecticut residents despite the shrinking commitment from the state. We provided over \$2.6 million in Wesleyan grant aid to Connecticut residents last year. Of the 86 students who received CICS funding last year, 40% were minority students. Unlike many schools, we meet the full demonstrated need of our Connecticut students and all students at Wesleyan. The state's commitment to fund the CICS grant is an important part of what makes it possible for us to sustain our commitment to meeting the financial need to these students.

We save the State significant costs by educating Connecticut residents who might otherwise attend in-state institutions. We maintain an extraordinary commitment to provide access and opportunity to students. We dedicate our endowment resources to maintaining affordable loan levels well below those of University of Connecticut students (\$6,389 for UConn first year students versus \$3,612 for Wesleyan students in federal student loans according to the most recent federal data). In addition, we have a higher percentage of Pell grant eligible students than

the University of Connecticut (17% versus 16%). As we can demonstrate, institutions with higher endowments often provide greater access to higher education than our state college peers.

The proposal to the legislature asks schools with the largest endowments to leave the CICS program. Wesleyan is fortunate to have an endowment of almost \$600 million, but it should be clear that the payout from the endowment does not even cover the institution's annual financial aid commitments. We use our resources to help provide access to students who deserve admission. The CICS dollars are an important part of our support to these worthy young men and women.

I am eager to help the administration be successful in its efforts to improve education in the state but I hope you will help independent universities like Wesleyan maintain its scholarship support for Connecticut residents.