CONNECTICUT STATE
COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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Board of Regents for Higher Education
ConnSCU
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Testimony for Raised Bill 224: An Act Increasing the Competitiveness of Small and Medium Businesses Through Research and Development

Good afternoon, Senator LeBeau, Representative Berger and members of the Commerce Committee. For the record, I am Gail Coppage, Director of Innovation and Outreach for the Board of Regents of Higher Education (BOR). I am here today to speak on behalf of the 17 institutions that comprise the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) System. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today on Senate Bill 224, *An Act Concerning Increasing the Competitiveness of Small and Medium Businesses Through Research and Development.*

The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU)/Board of Regents for Higher Education respectfully request that we receive consideration as an additional cooperative partner, together with UConn to assist in increasing the competitiveness of small and medium businesses through research and development.

ConnSCU and the Board of Regents for Higher Education are heavily invested and interested in supporting Connecticut manufacturers and supporting key external partnerships to grow manufacturing in the state. The evidence of this partnership with the manufacturing industry includes innovative programs, certificates, options, non-credit programming, grant awards and articulation agreements with sister institutions.

Examples of commitment to manufacturing include:

- The successful awarding of a $2.1 million grant from the US Department of Labor Community-Based Job Training Grant to the twelve community colleges: Skills in Manufacturing and Related Technologies (SMART) to provide education and training for pre-manufacturing through advanced manufacturing programming.
- Three Community Colleges were recently awarded the opportunity to create a manufacturing center on campus: Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport; Naugatuck Valley Community College, Waterbury, and Quinebaug Valley Community College, Danielson. Governor Malloy and the legislature welcomed the opportunity to support advanced manufacturing in the state and allocated $17.8 million in state bond funds for either the enhancement or creation of three manufacturing centers, in addition to the successful Asnuntuck Community College model.
- The Community Colleges' College of Technology is a virtual statewide initiative that provides career pathways for students to earn certificates – Associate of Science and Bachelor of Science

degrees in Engineering and Technology disciplines. In 2004, The College of Technology received a National Science Foundation (NSF) Advanced Technological Education (ATE) award to establish the Regional Center for Next Generation Manufacturing (RCNGM). The strategic objective of the ATE grant program is to advance the knowledge of technicians for the high-technology fields that drive our nation's economy. The Regional Center for Next Generation Manufacturing exposes students and faculty to technical fields in Manufacturing in an inclusive educational environment. Innovative learning modules for faculty and students are in the emerging areas such as fuel cells, laser manufacturing, nanotechnology, biomedical applications and aerospace.

- Other significant and critically important elements that show our vested interest and support of the needs of the manufacturing community include the strong partnership between the five Workforce Investment Boards and the Connecticut Department of Labor in another recent US Department of Labor grant award: CT STEM which looks to grow and strengthen efforts toward building and nurturing a capable talented STEM workforce for Connecticut.
- The partnership between the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut together with the Community College System with the recent grant award from the National Fund for Workforce Solutions to the Workforce Solutions Collaborative actively supports the education and training of an entry-level workforce in the areas of healthcare, energy and all levels of manufacturing.
- A recent US Department of Labor grant award to the Connecticut Business and Industry Association Education Foundation supported advanced manufacturing efforts, resulting in the community colleges offering new credit certificate programs in the areas of Lean Manufacturing and Supply Chain Management. Such coursework is extremely popular by the small and medium sized manufacturers in Connecticut.
- The combined strength and efforts of the Community Colleges to support education and training for advanced manufacturing combined with the diverse number of educational opportunities found in the four universities – Central Connecticut State University, Eastern Connecticut State University, Southern Connecticut State University and Western Connecticut State University – provide a recognized pathway through business, engineering, and all STEM programs.
- Charter Oak State College, offering fully online degree programs in areas such as the Business Administration Concentration and the Organizational Leadership Concentration, provides additional opportunities for both owners and employees of small and medium businesses – the option of completing a degree online while still working full-time.
- Central Connecticut State University's Institute of Technology and Business Development (ITBD) supports Connecticut businesses and business-related organizations with training, technology assistance, conferencing services, procurement services and business incubation. ITBD turns ideas into ventures, aids the growth of existing businesses, and helps Connecticut's business community succeed in today's challenging domestic and international market.

The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities and Board of Regents for Higher Education want to remain an active partner in support of manufacturing in Connecticut and, if included as a partner with UConn in Raised Bill 224, will agree to support the use of existing facilities and mentors from our system to work collaboratively with UConn and industry to grow the role of advanced manufacturing in Connecticut. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to speak today. I would be happy to answer any questions.