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**Testimony for the  
Education Committee  
From  
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Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges  
March 5, 2012**

On behalf of the member institutions of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges (CCIC), I am submitting testimony regarding ***HB 5356, An Act Concerning Bridges Between Public Schools and Institutions of Higher Education***. This bill seeks to improve college preparedness by aligning high school and college curricula by establishing a pilot program that requires each priority school district to partner with a public institution of higher education to evaluate and align curricula based on Connecticut's common core state standards (CCSS) and to test students and assess the results to determine college readiness.

CCIC supports this concept but urges that the bill be revised to allow priority school districts to partner with private, non-profit higher education institutions, as well as public institutions of higher education, in this endeavor.

CCIC institutions are located all across the state, many in or near priority school districts where public higher education institutions lack a presence. In addition, many CCIC schools have long-standing, well-established relationships with these districts. For example, Sacred Heart University works closely with the Bridgeport public schools. In fact, Bridgeport recently received a federal grant to work with Sacred Heart's School of Education to train a cadre of math and science teachers to work in the district upon graduation. Fairfield University and the University of Bridgeport also have a presence in Bridgeport and throughout Fairfield County. Similarly, Mitchell College and Connecticut College often work with New London public schools in a variety of capacities. Trinity College and the University of Hartford have close ties with Hartford public schools as well.

On top of these well-established relationships, CCIC institutions serve as partners in the implementation of the CCSS in Connecticut and should not be left out of this opportunity. It is critical that all our of state's higher education institutions understand the standards and new assessments required at the K-12 level as they develop expectations for college level work.

Albertus Magnus College, Connecticut College, Fairfield University, Goodwin College,  
Mitchell College, Quinnipiac University, Rensselaer at Hartford, Sacred Heart University, Saint Joseph College, St.  
Vincent's College, Trinity College, University of Bridgeport, University of Hartford, University of New Haven,  
Wesleyan University, Yale University