



## State of Connecticut

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Good morning Chairs Bye and Willis, and Ranking Members Boucher and LeGeyt, and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. I am here to comment on House Bill 5278, *An Act Facilitating Dual Enrollment Opportunities*.

I would like to first take this opportunity on behalf of the House Republican Caucus to thank the Committee for raising this important piece of legislation. As you are already aware, this legislation will allow a high school student to earn up to two years worth of tuition-free college credit while enrolled in high school. Under this program, high school students will take both high school and college level courses concurrently, and by the time they graduate high school, they will have a high school diploma, as well as an Associates Degree. The legislation tasks The Board of Regents for Higher Education to identify and facilitate dual enrollment opportunities in high schools and public colleges and universities. The goal is for the Board of Regents to align secondary and postsecondary courses of study for high school students participating in a program focused on work-based instruction.

Much has been said about the importance of aligning secondary education and postsecondary courses of study. All too often, students graduate high school unprepared for the challenges facing them in college. In the worst scenarios, students enter their freshmen year of college only to be met with the requirement of completing non-credit remedial courses before being allowed to enroll in courses for credit. By allowing students to enroll in a work-based program of study at the high school level, which includes an internship component, students will not only become more engaged in their studies and stay focused, but they will be able to attain the knowledge base necessary to succeed in their college courses.

Finally, by allowing students the opportunity to earn college credits as a high school student, they will graduate with the knowledge and experience needed in order to partake in college internships and externships, and overall, gain a richer college experience. With a high school program consisting of a work-based instruction model, students will be exposed to internship opportunities that they may otherwise not experience until the end of their college career. Teaching students the values associated with a workplace environment at an early age will help prepare them for when they take on internship roles in college, which may then lead to a full time job once they graduate.

Again, the House Republican Caucus stands behind this bill, and we will be happy to work with the Committee to see that this legislation moves through the legislative process and is enacted into law.

Thank You.