

Written Testimony of **Bryan A. Flanagan**
Undergraduate Student at the University of Connecticut
Regarding Bill HB 5362

To the members of the Higher Education and Workforce Advancement Committee,

My name is Bryan Flanagan, and I am currently a Junior at the University of Connecticut, expecting to earn my Bachelors Degree in both Political Science and Economics in the upcoming year. I would like to implore the committee to carefully examine HB 5326 and support the bill with every resource you have available. This legislation is not only important to the students in Connecticut, but also their families and friends as well.

Tuition for higher education is extremely difficult in today's economy, and without help from State Government, most families could not afford to put their children through school. With UConn's tuition in particular being raised 6.4% in the next year, there are not many options for medium to low income households when trying to afford a better education. The tax relief that HB 5362 would create is something that cannot be ignored, and would be beneficial to the State of Connecticut, not only in the retention of our college graduates, but with investment in local infrastructure and increases to the housing market. If students believe the state will be working with them to create a better learning environment, they would be more inclined to make employment decisions in their home state.

I personally am considered a "middle class resident" in Connecticut, which is something to be hesitant about. Both myself and my two sisters are attending higher educational institutions, and the burden it has put on my family is tremendous. We are very nervous in the upcoming year that we will not be able to afford a decent college education, and we do not know how to afford the rising costs associated with a college degree. With the implementation of the current language, a burden could be lifted off the shoulders of both my family, as well as the thousands of other students that are struggling as well.

The upfront costs of this legislation are very minimal, and after years of prosperity that would come from this bill, we can expect to see a rise in both income and business taxes collected, which would more than make up for the initial loss. In times like these, we need to be looking at the long term, and not the day-to-day. We need to be investing in the future of our students, as soon enough they will be assimilating into our institutions. Passing this bill would be a sign of good faith to the community, and would ease the stress of our families and students. As a fellow Connecticut resident, I would be eternally grateful for the continued effort on this bill.

In closing, as I have been able to see the Higher Education and Workforce Advancement Committee personally work for many important tasks, I would highly recommend the passing of HB 5326.

Sincerely,

Bryan Flanagan