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Testimony In Support of **S.B. No. 840 An Act Concerning Next Generation Connecticut**

My name is Lior Trestman, I am a sophomore at the University of Connecticut majoring in Biomedical Engineering, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of Next Generation Connecticut. As a student in a rapidly developing field, there are a number of things that are important to me.

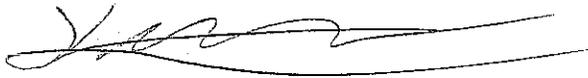
Foremost is a body of faculty that is commensurate with both the teaching and research standards set by our institution. Faculty act not only as teachers in the classrooms, but as mentors outside and in the lab. The hiring of more than 250 new instructors, buttressed by new facilities, will give thousands of students the opportunity to work on cutting edge research. In terms of a STEM education, *that* is where the learning takes place. As someone who has spent countless hours in lab, I can say with conviction that the opportunity to experience hands on research is the single most important way to bring the classroom, internships, and future careers to life.

Coming from a small hometown in northwest Connecticut, the UConn student body is a rich experience that I feel privileged to enjoy. It comprises individuals from every background whose varying perspectives constantly reshape my own. These students from every corner of the country and beyond are seeing the opportunities here, and are coming for an education. The trick is keeping them here.

While Connecticut is home to a number of high-tech industries, when students are seeking the big names on lists of internships and employers they are primarily not here. Students follow the jobs, and similarly the jobs follow the students; we need to have both.

Next Generation Connecticut is as forward thinking and ambitious as the name entails: culture both industries and families in concert here in Connecticut. When the programs at many institutions are struggling to cut fat, now is Connecticut's opportunity to build muscle for a healthy and sustainable future.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected loops and lines, positioned below the text.