

Szabo, Todd

From: Witkowski, Christine M <CWitkowski@mxcc.commnet.edu>
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2013 3:18 PM
To: HEDTestimony
Cc: Morris, Jonathan I; Minkler, Steven L
Subject: In Support of HB5816

I am writing in support of House Bill 5816 to authorize bond funding for capital improvements at Middlesex Community College. I am an assistant professor and the coordinator of the Environmental Science program at Middlesex Community College. During the three years I have been at MxCC, I have experienced first-hand the severe limitations imposed by the lack of adequate facilities, especially space and technology for teaching science. I was previously an adjunct professor at Manchester Community College where significant investment in facilities created some of the best science classrooms I have had the pleasure of teaching in (including universities). Coming to Middlesex I have had to curtail what I was able to do with students at Manchester, because of the limited space and technology available here. I can say unequivocally that this has resulted in a poorer educational experience for the students, especially those who plan to continue their education in the sciences and hope for a career in the environmental field where hands-on technology-oriented experience is essential to success. In addition, the Environmental Science program here is growing each year (with a 50% jump in enrollment just in the last year). We would like to be able to encourage the continuation of this growth trend, but without adequate facilities, we will not be able to accommodate all who are interested in the program, nor will we be able to retain students who are already enrolled but can't complete the program requirements.

Given the expected expansion of the job market in environmental and other science fields over the next decade, the central geographic location of MxCC, and the fact that community college students are among those most likely to stay in Connecticut, a capital investment in science facilities at MxCC would pay enormous dividends for the state economy down the road. I urge you to support House Bill 5816.

Sincerely,
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