



**Testimony by Lewis J. Robinson
Chairman**

Board of Regents for Higher Education
Connecticut State Colleges & Universities
Before the Higher Education and
Employment Advancement Committee
March 14, 2013

Senators Bye and Boucher, Representatives Willis and LeGeyt, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on **Senate Bill 867, *An Act Concerning Faculty Representation on the Board of Regents for Higher Education***. I am Lewis J. Robinson, Chair of the Board of Regents for Higher Education. The Board of Regents governs Connecticut's four state universities, 12 community colleges, and Charter Oak State College, the state's only public, fully-online institution.

The appointed Board of Regents, a body not staffed with full membership until December 2011, is continually maturing and developing appropriate and productive relationships with staff, its subcommittees, and various advisory committees. In line with the Association of Governing Boards' view on the role of faculty members on governing boards, the Board does not currently have any appointed faculty members. However, recognizing the dedication of our faculty and the critical input they can and do provide, we engage in regular and productive dialogue with not only the seven-member Faculty Advisory Committee, but also with faculty from across our 17 diverse institutions. Further, through Public Act 12-7, the membership of the Faculty Advisory Committee was expanded from seven members to ten. The Board looks forward to the additional contributions these new members will provide upon election by their colleagues.

Though the relationship is young and continuing to evolve, the Faculty Advisory Committee has already helped shape Board of Regents policy. Among our first successes is the Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP). It was constructed with contributions from this committee, as it decided by consensus to circulate the TAP among faculty to solicit constructive suggestions and comments, and nearly every proposal made by the Faculty Advisory Committee was adopted.

In addition, faculty committees met over the summer to develop a framework for the common transferable General Education Core, which included the development of common lower pre-major pathways — 30 credits of transferable general education credits shared amongst all 12 Connecticut Community Colleges.

In response to Public Act 12-40, *An Act Concerning College Readiness and Completion*, community college and state university faculty are working together to develop courses with embedded support. These courses will continue development through the spring of 2013 and will be piloted during the 2013–14 academic year.

As the state's largest college and university system, we greatly respect the input of our current Faculty Advisory Committee, and that of all of our dedicated faculty, and now request that the committee allow the Board of Regents time to continue to expand upon our initial successes under the current structure, and delay the consideration of this bill until a future legislative session.

As the Board nears completion of its task to identify candidates for a new Board of Regents President to recommend to Governor Malloy, we are continuing to work through the growing pains inherent in the development of a new system and ask for time to install a new leader without also redefining the important relationships between the Board and faculty which have led to some critical initial successes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.