

**Testimony before the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee  
RE: S.B. 867 AN ACT CONCERNING FACULTY REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Submitted by Stephen Adair, Ph.D., Professor and Chair of the Sociology Department at Central  
Connecticut State University and Vice-Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Board of  
Regents for Higher Education**

**March 14, 2013**

Good afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Willis, and Members of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee. I am Stephen Adair, Professor and Chair of the Sociology Department at Central Connecticut State University. I am currently Vice-Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee and served as Chair through 2012.

I am here to urge your support for SB 867 An Act Concerning Faculty Representation on the Board of Regents, which would make the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee non-voting members of the Board of Regents, and allow the members of the FAC to serve as voting members of the non-personnel subcommittees of the Board.

I will begin by thanking this committee for the forethought in creating a Faculty Advisory Committee in the initial legislation that created the Board of Regents.

This past year has afforded me an invaluable opportunity to serve my colleagues, my profession, and public, higher education in Connecticut, yet it certainly has also been the most challenging of my academic career.

As we reported to this committee two weeks ago, the Faculty Advisory Committee has had an active first year. We made significant revisions in the Board's new Transfer and Articulation policy (TAP) that will facilitate the transfer of students across the institutions in the system. We successfully lobbied the Board to insure a faculty vote on the new, common General Education framework under the TAP policy – a vote which went favorably. We are in the midst of ongoing discussions with the Board and the senior administration regarding the continuing role of faculty committees in completing the major program curriculum designs for new transfer degree programs at the community colleges. We coordinated faculty votes through campus governance bodies regarding the Board's strategic plan efforts and have pushed hard to insist that faculty ought to be a key stakeholder in the strategic planning process. We worked with the system's senior administration as a contributing voice in the initial planning and committee design to meet the requirements of PA 12-40, the developmental education bill passed last year. This list could go on.

Yet, over the first year, the biggest challenge and priority for the FAC has been the organizational relations and lines of communication between the FAC, the Board, and senior administration. There is no structural diagram or established set of rules and procedures that describe how the FAC ought to proceed with its recommendations or resolutions. The lack of a clear line of communication meant that

the work of the FAC sometimes seemed to be no more than a conversation amongst the members in a closed room. We have had to be both assertive and creative to make our voices heard. This bill would address this organizational problem.

As I see it, the Faculty Advisory Committee serves two primary functions. It provides a window for the Board into the more than 5000 faculty members across the 17 institutions, and it brings a faculty voice to the Board on matters of systemic importance. Having a faculty representative body with clear lines of communication can only enhance the Board's decision-making capacity, improve its legitimacy, and make our system of shared governance more responsive to the interests of all.

In passing SB 867, I believe this committee will be furthering its own intent behind the initial creation of the Faculty Advisory Committee, while improving the decision-making capacity of the Board of Regents.

I thank you for the initial opportunity to serve on the FAC, for raising this bill, and for hearing my testimony.