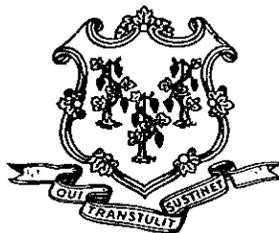


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Good afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Willis and Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. I would like to express my support for SB 205, AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENT ATHLETES AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

This bill would require that public educational institutions that receive at least \$5 million from media rights contracts provide academic scholarships to certain student athletes whose athletic scholarships are not renewed. This requirement would apply to student-athletes who are in good academic standing but lose their academic scholarships due to incapacitating injury or illness or who have exhausted their National Collegiate Athletic Association athletic eligibility. I would support language that would also ensure that student athletes not lose their scholarships to make room for other athletes with superior skills.

While I understand that this legislation would essentially codify UConn's current policy, it would also ensure that this policy remain in effect regardless of any change in administration or policy at the University. Prior to 2012, colleges and universities were prohibited by the NCAA from offering athletes a four-year scholarship; all athletic

scholarships were one-year renewable contracts. Now that the four-year scholarship option is available, Connecticut should make this our State's policy for student-athletes who remain in good standing. Student-athletes should be encouraged to be students even if they can no longer represent the university as athletes. I would be open to including language limiting the universities' exposure so that they would not be required to provide free education to athletes who turned professional and made large sums of money and choose to return to school many years later. Perhaps this could be accomplished with a ten year limit for time to use the scholarship.

Thank you for hearing this important bill.