

**TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE
HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
FEBRUARY 28th, 2013**

Good Afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. My name is Laura Cummings and I am testifying today on behalf of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. CBIA's 10,000 member companies represent the broad diversity of Connecticut's businesses, and the vast majority of our members are small companies with fewer than 50 employees.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **support of SB 476** An Act Requiring Input From Local Manufacturers In Developing Manufacturing Technology Programs At The Regional Community-Technical Colleges.

SB 476 seeks to require each regional community-technical college to obtain input from local manufactures regarding their workforce needs prior to revising or expanding the school's manufacturing technology program.

CBIA has heard time and again from the manufacturing community that they are experiencing a gap between the talent they need to maintain and grow their businesses and the applicants they find. Often times the applicants are untrained in basic manufacturing skills, or lack "soft skills" such as the communication and problem solving skills needed to perform on the job. Open positions often go unfilled or employers look out of state to recruit more qualified individuals.

This bill will help to create a clearer path for Connecticut students to receive the right skills and training to prepare them for a career in manufacturing by opening the dialogue between our community colleges and our employers. This will not only help to strengthen our workforce, but will also be a more efficient use of educational resources.

For the aforementioned reasons, CBIA urges you to **support SB 476**.