

Dear Board of Regents,

I am providing written testimony for Bill 844, An act implementing the budget recommendations of the governor concerning Higher Education. My name is Jessica Owen and I am a senior at Central Connecticut State University. I am a biology major concentrating on ecology and biodiversity and my expected graduation date is December 2013. I would like to thank you for reading this written testimony.

Over my past four years at Central Connecticut State University the tuition has increased considerably, from \$7,414.00 a year, my freshman year, to now \$8,312.00 a year in my senior year. Now the proposed increase will raise my education even higher. This is not including room and board, since I am also a resident on campus and have been for all four of my years here.

Every person that is interviewed about higher education sees the value in it. They all say how important certain skills are for certain jobs, or how the public is not trained in the jobs that are available. I am a geographic information sciences minor and after my Bachelors Degree I will be trained to create specific maps for the towns and cities of Connecticut that few others can create. I will have the knowledge of Connecticut ecosystems and biodiversity with the abilities to map the entire state of Connecticut for the any uses that towns and/or cites may want or need. Yet, I may not be able to complete my last semester here due to the increase in tuition. The strain financially is too much for me and I only have 4 classes left in my degree, and I may not be able to finish.

The first choice is always to raise tuition and cut faculty and staff. If you cut faculty and staff you are also cutting the options of classes that I have to choose. Since I only have 4 classes remaining, what if one of the classes I am required to take cannot be offered next semester because you cut the funding to that professor? I will not graduate next semester and that will add yet more financial strain upon my fellow classmates and myself.

I want you to reconsider raising tuition at the four state universities (Central, Eastern, Western, and Southern). These schools are the option for students who are academically able to provide a better future for Connecticut but cannot afford larger universities. If you make the CSU system as expensive as those larger universities, than you are ruining the future of Connecticut. Thank you for your time.

Jessica Owen  
Central Connecticut State University