

Today, I will be testifying on Bill 844, "An Act Implementing the Budget Recommendations of the Governor Concerning Higher Education." My name is Shaun Havanec, and I'm currently a graduate student at CCSU. My major is International Studies, and I have an estimated graduation date of fall, 2015. I've written to this committee today because the proposed budget to the Connecticut State Universities and Community Colleges would directly affect me and others in the same financial situation as myself. Cuts to funding programs such as the First Five, which was responsible for handing out \$115 million to Bridgewater Associates to *assist them with moving their location* in Connecticut, would be a more practical and logical choice than anything proposed against education. Also, when 90% of Connecticut's students remain in-state and will be a major factor in Connecticut's economic recovery, it seems to me that the proposed budget cuts and tuition hikes would push students away from this state.

I'd like to ask the committee to consider the repercussions associated with the cutting of funds to the Connecticut State Universities and Community Colleges. I have already seen some of those repercussions in the form of tuition hikes through my younger brother just this semester. When I was a former student at MCC, the Pell Grant was able to cover my full-time status, and I received a refund for the excess amount. My brother has had to take the semester off from MCC because the tuition has increased so much that the Pell Grant no longer covers the expenses that were covered for me in 2006. He and I both come from a poor background, and we rely upon grants and loans to help us with the costs of education. I firmly believe my education has helped me to become a productive member of society, and I think that my brother along with everyone else of a similar background to our own deserves the same opportunity.

Thanks for your time.