Alicia DiVito
Southern Connecticut State University
Testimony Public Hearing 2/24

Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Alicia DiVito and I am the President of the Southern Connecticut State University Student Government Association.

I grew up about 20 minutes from here, in Enfield. And just three years ago, I was a senior at Enrico Fermi High School making the largest decision of my then 17-yeard old life…where did I want to go to college?

I excelled academically in high school, which opened the admissions doors to many prestigious institutions. However, financially, I knew my options were more limited.

I enrolled at SCSU and began my studies in Business Administration in the fall of 2012.

Like many of my peers, I do not benefit from endless streams of financial resources. I come from a middle class family that worked hard to provide for my brother – a junior at the University of Connecticut – and I. For my family, public higher education was our only option.

Choosing Southern was not only the largest decision, but as it turns out, the best decision. I have found the coursework academically challenging and stimulating and the out-of-class opportunities engaging and rewarding, providing for a well rounded experience that I truly believe will place me ahead of my private school peers when I enter Connecticut's job market.

This is possible with the support and guidance of faculty and administrators who put students first; those who dedicate their lives to teaching, both in our classrooms and in our whole student experience.

As I reach the mid-point of my collegiate journey, I know that I am receiving a superior education and am doing so without accruing immense debt.

I applaud the legislature for their work in supporting higher education, and I ask that you increase your investment in the state's ConnSCU system. The doors of Connecticut's public higher education system must remain open to all. Failure to invest will undoubtedly leave people behind.

The students of ConnSCU are the future of our great state and I look forward to calling myself a graduate of Southern Connecticut State University and contributing back to the state that supported me.

Thank you.