

TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE
HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
MARCH 4, 2014

My name is Jennifer Herz and I am Assistant Counsel for the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA represents approximately 10,000 businesses throughout Connecticut and the vast majority of these are small companies employing less than 50 people.

I am submitting this testimony in **support of HB 5434 An Act Requiring a Technical High School and Community-Technical College Cooperative**. CBIA supports this bill because it is a common sense approach to supporting the pipeline of talent in Connecticut by utilizing existing resources.

Currently, many of Connecticut's community colleges and technical high schools *only* benefit from the use of their own high tech equipment (if available) to train their students. But, this bill will encourage these entities to work together to make the best use of the existing equipment by sharing resources with neighboring schools. Most of the high tech equipment needed to train students is very expensive and therefore utilizing it to the greatest extent possible not only helps more students learn the skills they need to attain a good job but also helps the bottom line for our community colleges and technical high schools. If more students utilize the same machine for training the less machines these institutions will need to purchase overall.

For example, the high tech equipment on any given campus may become unused once students on that particular school's schedule leave for the day. But, under this program the neighboring institution may take advantage of that machine's downtime by scheduling use of the equipment for their students.

Finally, it is crucial high school students have the option of earning college credit for their college coursework. Not only will college credit put high school students on the path to success but also provide the appropriate incentive for their hard work.

High tech machinery comes at a high cost. CBIA supports this bill since it will help learning institutions defray some of the cost by maximizing the use of the existing equipment. Additionally, starting students on a path towards college credit in high school is an effective incentive to keep those students in school and graduating with the skills Connecticut's employers need to stay competitive in a global economy.

CBIA urges your support of HB 5434 because it will support Connecticut's pipeline of talent for the 21st century.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer CBIA's comments.