

Testimony to the Higher Education Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee

Re: Governor's Biennial Budget, FY 16-17

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Buenas noches, boa noite, good evening Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Willis, and other members of the Higher Education Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Mary Ann Mahony, and I am Professor of History, and Coordinator of the Committee on Latin American Studies of the Program on International and Area Studies at Central Connecticut State University President, Central Connecticut State University, American Association of University Professors. I come before you this evening to underscore the importance of the education that the Connecticut State Universities, and particularly Central Connecticut State University, provide to the residents and taxpayers of Connecticut and to ask you to do everything in your power to allow our significant contributions to the well-being of the state to continue.

In the brief time since the Governor announced his budget, I have not been able to ascertain the specific impact on our university, on the programs in which I teach, on my students or on my colleagues, but I have the impression that the situation is grim. I therefore want to impress upon you three important points:

- 1) The faculty at the four CSUs provide excellent educations in the face of significant challenges
 - 2) The Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities provide excellent economic return on investment to the residents of the State of Connecticut.
 - 3) Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities play an essential role in improving the quality of life of the citizens of Connecticut, and, I believe are engaged in resolving some of the major social issues that face us as a State.
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- 1) I am one of more than 3,400 faculty who teach at a Connecticut State University. About 850 of us teach at CCSU, where I work, but less than half of us are now full time, tenure track. All of us teach, but only tenure-track faculty are expected to research and publish and perform all of the different forms of service that is required for the University to function. That includes student advising, which our part-time colleagues are not expected to do. Our part-time colleagues are very dedicated, but, their salaries are quite low. Many teach at two or three institutions to make ends meet.
 - 2) The CSUs have a tremendous educational impact. Each year the four CSUs graduate somewhere around 6,500 students, most of whom come from Connecticut and most of whom remain in Connecticut, contributing to the state's economic and social vitality. According to President Jack Miller of CCSU, approximately 40,000 Central graduates, ages 65 and younger, live in Connecticut. Those graduates earn, on average, more than \$22,000 per year above what they

would have earned with only a high school degree. Dr. Miller estimates that, assuming that 80% of those CCSU alumni are in the state's workforce, a Central education generates more than \$700 million in value-added annual earnings, and those dollars circulate throughout the state's economy providing revenue for Connecticut and its many businesses.

Here in Connecticut, I have met Central grads who work in all phases of the economy. As you know, we train a large number of teachers, and I have former students working in cities and towns as diverse as Southington, Newington, Bridgeport and Hartford. But I have also met former CCSU students working in sectors for which we are less well-known, including the law and medicine. Our History Department is extraordinarily proud of Mike Markowitz, a CCSU grad who left CCSU for Harvard Law School and then returned to Connecticut as a practicing attorney in one of Hartford's firms. I was also very glad to learn that the CCSU grad who administered the anesthesia during my 2010 shoulder surgery believed that he had received an excellent education. It had certainly allowed him to be admitted and succeed at UCONN Medical School. As a faculty member who teaches Latin American history and International Studies, I am proud to report on a former student who is now working for the State Department, others working for Homeland Security, still working as staff members for Connecticut's legislators in Washington, and as a member of a department with a strong Public History Program, in museums and historical societies throughout the state. On a very different note, according to Professor Jacob Kovel, Chair of the CCSU Department of Construction Management, many of the construction companies that received Excellence in Construction awards at the annual meeting of the Connecticut Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors last month, employ CCSU Construction Management graduates. Our current students are studying fields from nursing, to construction management, to international affairs, to History and Music. You will hear from some of those students late this evening.

From my own experience, I can state that our students are contributing to the resolution of the ethnic and racial divisions in our state. I teach Latin American history, and in my classes I routinely see large numbers of students of Latin American descent, as well as African Americans and European Americans. In my two large general education surveys, one on the history of Latin America to 1823 and the other since 1823, students of very diverse backgrounds meet each other, work together and develop dialogue across ethnic and racial boundaries. I see them leave my classes, having made friends with people from social groups with whom they have never interacted before. One of the most important of these students is here tonight and will speak to you himself.

- 3) **Financial Impact:** I am not an economist, but years ago in a macroeconomics course, I learned some fundamental rules about economies, one of which was the multiplier effect, or the notion that an increase in spending can lead to an increase in income and that a decrease in spending can lead to a concurrent retraction in income. With that in mind, it is important to remember that state spending on the four Connecticut State Universities is an excellent return on investment. According to a 2010 study, which I believe to be still generally accurate, the Connecticut State University System (Central, Eastern, Southern and Western) generates \$8 of economic activity in Connecticut for every \$1 of state general fund appropriation, excluding capital funds; CSUS operations and spending by

employees and students were estimated to have an estimated \$1.84 billion economic impact that year; CSUS provides more than \$379 million annually in employee income and benefits to more than 3,000 full time and 2500 part time employees, who, in turn, pay taxes and use their income to boost the state's economy. Through economic activity, CSUS estimated that we create an additional 4,200 full time jobs throughout the state generating at least \$140 million in income.

(<http://www.easternct.edu/mt-static/suoaf/CSUSfactsheet-02-2010.pdf>)

According to President Jack Miller of CCSU, when we take that economic impact down to the University level, we see that the University where I teach, Central Connecticut State University, contributes significantly to the state's economy as well. Dr. Miller indicates that CCSU's annual estimated economic impact from expenditures (operating, capital, and student spending) and student labor totals \$581.3 million, calculated according to a standard and customary multiplier coefficient of 2.13.

In other words, each dollar that the State spends at Central or one of the other CSUs has enormous **financial** returns to the state.

I do not have time to discuss all of the important programs that the faculty at the CSUs have developed but would like to point you to the new AAUP blog, CSUConnects.org, that carries stories about the important contributions that CSU faculty are making to the state of Connecticut.

Many thanks for your time,

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Mahony