

Donald Palumbo
Southern Connecticut State University
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Members of the Appropriation Committee:

Thank you for allowing us to come make our voices heard.

My name is Donald Palumbo and I am a senior communication major at Southern Connecticut State University from Guilford Connecticut. I have commuted to Southern for my entire college tenure. I am confident saying my time at Southern has been nothing short of life changing. I have learned far more than historical dates, problem-solving procedures, and higher writing skills. I have learned to come into my own, to think critically, and to engage the world around me with compassion and to strive for understanding. I am so grateful that I have been allowed this opportunity.

All of this would not have been possible without the help of my loving family, and federal financial aid. In fact even with assistance I've depleted the modest fund my grandmother set up for me, as well as the entirety of my own savings. This is in part due to raising tuition costs. The price of higher education is too high. Students all over the country are straddled with thousands upon thousands of dollars of debt that they will struggle to pay off as they endeavor to find a job that can bear that weight. That is if we can afford the degree in the first place.

We are the future of this state. We need the tools to bear the weight of the responsibility of the world we are about to inherit. In this hyper speed, intensely polarized world, we are constantly assailed with various messages while we engage with all sorts of people, and handle every kind of responsibility. Higher education is the road to engaging these challenges and conquering them.

Everyone deserves a chance at this opportunity to improve upon him or her and become the person that they've always wanted to be. To become independent, functioning individuals who will continue to work towards a better future.

Thank you