



February 24, 2015

Testimony on Higher Education Provisions of the Governor's Proposed Biennial Budget

Submitted by: David Downes, Advocacy Consultant
Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education, a statewide professional organization representing providers of mandated adult education.

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee:

I represent CAACE, the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education, whose programs serve over 25,000 adult learners in this state who are seeking to develop their basic academic skills, learn the English language, become US citizens or earn a high school diploma. Through the passage of Public Act 12-40 and with the help of directed funding provided by the Legislature last year, twenty-one adult education programs throughout Connecticut have also forged partnerships with all twelve of the state's community colleges to improve the performance of academic remediation programs for students trying to improve their futures through education.

While we recognize that our Legislature faces very difficult budgetary choices this year, we strongly urge that these cooperative remediation efforts between adult education and the community colleges, which took two years to initiate, continue to receive your strong support. In our slowly improving state economy, we must persist in our efforts to improve the chances of our neediest students to access the skills and training leading to jobs that enhance self-sufficiency.

Last year, state funding provided approximately \$11 million for academic remediation efforts, of which roughly \$1.9 million was specified for the partnership efforts mentioned above. We understand that the Governor's budget seeks to decrease spending for the community colleges by \$10 million, but we urge that any spending cuts not come from the vital efforts to make necessary improvements in the remediation performance at these colleges.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. For additional information, I can be reached at dldownes1015@gmail.com or at 860-508-3789.