

Testimony of Matt Fleury
For Re-appointment to the State of Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education
Before the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee
January 20, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about my reappointment to the Board of Regents for Higher Education.

My name is Matt Fleury and I reside in the city of Hartford with my wife and our two children, who are enrolled in our city's public school system. Professionally I am the president & CEO of the Connecticut Science Center, a nonprofit science education institution serving schools and families from every city and town in Connecticut. As a parent in an urban school district, a provider of life-long learning opportunities for all citizens and as a graduate of a community college and Charter Oak State College I am well acquainted with the importance of quality, affordable higher education. On the foundation of my community college and Charter Oak education, I earned an MBA from the University of Connecticut and enjoyed executive learning opportunities at Harvard and Yale, focusing on organizational and nonprofit leadership and governance.

It has been my great privilege and honor to serve as a member of the Board of Regents, overseeing Connecticut's extraordinarily valuable and promising state colleges and universities. I have been deeply impressed by the commitment and capabilities of administrators, faculty, staff and my fellow regents in our devotion to a system which serves 41% of college-going Connecticut residents.

Our focus is entirely on the educational opportunities we provide students. The CSCU's 17 campuses serve a greater proportion of Connecticut's future workforce than any other institution, so that the vitality of the system is crucial both to the individual prospects of our students and to the competitiveness of our population as a workforce - and therefore to our state's economy. Our initiative to upgrade facilities, sharpen programs and create a more cohesive and student-friendly system is in its early stages.

Economic conditions for both the state and students force us to seriously consider the cost of running the system even as we seek investment to address needs ranging from security to student advising and helping veterans. All this amid a changing world that demands science, technology, engineering and math skills at a rate too few American students are prepared to meet. We strive to sustain a system that is locally-based with our many campuses, while also being well-coordinated and efficient. We must balance the strong and valuable identities of our campuses with the financial investment inherent in this model, while also attending to the need to fairly compensate employees and keep tuition affordable. I appreciate that this is an immediate challenge for us as stewards of the system and for this body, as you contend with the limits of resources and the many urgent needs of our state.

I am deeply honored to have served the students of our great state, and equally grateful for your consideration of my candidacy to continue to serve.

I welcome your questions.