



Re: House Bills 6844 AN ACT CONCERNING IN-STATE TUITION ELIGIBILITY and  
6845 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
GOVERNOR CONCERNING HIGHER

Dear Chairs, Ranking Members, and members of the Committee,

My name is Mark Overmyer-Velázquez, I am an Associate Professor of History and Director of the Institute of Latino, Caribbean, and Latin American Studies at the University of Connecticut.

I also volunteer in an elected political position as Chairman of the West Hartford Board of Education.

My roles as a town official and university professor have allowed to me appreciate the support the state of Connecticut has done for education from pre-kindergarten through university and how difficult a task it is to pass a balanced budget. But we need to do more to support all our students in public education. We need to continue to be national leaders on this vital issue for our children, our students, and the overall health of our state.

I have the honor of working alongside undocumented students as a researcher and teacher at UConn. These students: Charlie, Jorge, Emilia, Paula and many others are among the hardest working and most diligent I have had the pleasure to teach in my 11 years at UConn. Passionate and determined, they deserve the same opportunities their fellow Connecticut students receive without a second thought.

Providing access to our most committed students not only is the right thing to do ethically, it is also the best choice economically: as our state works to retain its college graduates and create a welcoming environment for new immigrants, efforts such as House Bills 6844 and 6845 are a step in the right direction.

I encourage you to support House Bills 6844 and 6845 and continue to be national leaders in education by supporting all of our Connecticut students equally, student residents that add so much to our communities and state as a whole.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Overmyer-Velázquez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Mark Overmyer-Velázquez  
Director, El Instituto; Associate Professor of History  
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El Instituto: Institute of Latina/o,  
Caribbean, & Latin American Studies