



CONNECTICUT STATE  
COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

**Testimony by Keith Epstein**, Vice President,  
Facilities, Real Estate & Infrastructure Planning  
Board of Regents for Higher Education  
Before the Higher Education and Employment  
Advancement Committee  
February 10, 2015

Senators Bartolomeo and Witkos, Representatives Willis and Betts, and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments for your consideration on **SB 101, *An Act Establishing A Pilot Program To Increase Diversity In The Workforce Of State Contractors.***

For the record, my name Keith Epstein, and I am Vice President for Facilities, Real Estate & Infrastructure Planning for the Board of Regents, governing Southern Connecticut State University as well as 16 other public institutions throughout the state.

I would like to associate both Southern and the Board of Regents with comments submitted by the Department of Administrative Services regarding SB 101 and elaborate on the prospect of increased project costs.

The State of Connecticut has a rigorous policy concerning the awarding of projects to small businesses and minority-owned businesses, and further protects the integrity of the state's workforce by requiring large contractors to have an affirmative action plan on file with CHRO. We believe these requirements lend themselves to fairness and diversity in contracting. By adding to requirements, costs are increased in two ways:

1. Rigid requirements increase the potential administrative costs and timelines for a contractor that must comply, with the resulting costs being passed on to Southern and raising questions as to what happens if a contractor temporarily falls short of the requirements.
2. Southern would be placed at a competitive disadvantage in an environment where contractors may be able to participate in the bidding process for other state projects. This potential reduction in bid volume may result in Southern not receiving the most competitive offer possible.

With respect to the worthy goals in this legislation, we are concerned with the practical impacts on project costs and timelines, and request the committee not consider this proposal at this time.

If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact Kyle Thomas, BOR Legislative Program Manager, at 860-723-0017.