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Testimony in support of HB 6117

Dear Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Olivia Alsip and I am a student at the University of Hartford. I am writing to support HB 6117: An Act Concerning the Use of Open-Source Textbooks in Higher Education.

This is my senior year at the University of Hartford, and honestly I'm surprised I made it this far. Not because I'm a bad student, not because I don't care, but because of the astronomical cost of attending post-secondary schooling. Sky high tuition notwithstanding the cost of attendance is still a burden to many students like myself. In particular, book prices are one of the largest hurdles to education. Every semester I found myself wondering how I would pay for their books. Often times, books at a normal book store are not particularly expensive, yet books designed for college instruction have a noticeable mark up as students have no choice but to buy them. From my personal experiences most of the required books range between \$100 and \$200 in price. When you think about the number of classes students take and the fact that many courses require more than one book the price is staggering.

In desperation, many students, like myself, begin cutting corners resulting in a loss of education; we search through multiple sources for the cheapest copy, we buy older editions with outdated information, we try to go without buying the books, we borrow them from each other and rush to finish the assignments before we have to return them, and we work more hours to pay for our books yet have less time to read them. A few textbooks can be equal to the price of a credit hour; as a result students limit the amount of classes they take, even if they are covered by tuition. We also limit what kind of classes we take. We take the classes with the fewest required books, which unfortunately gives rise to the proliferation of poor understandings of the subjects and misinformation. The high price of books makes valuable information inaccessible to many when information and knowledge should be shared, especially in an educational environment.

So, I urge all members of this committee to support HB 6117.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,
Olivia Alsip