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***Every student, every day,
in every classroom!***



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TESTIMONY ON: SB 398, “An Act Requiring A Study Of Certain Employment Transition In Eastern Connecticut”

TESTIMONY TO: Commerce Committee:

POSITION: Supports

PROVIDED BY: Rana Arshed Hafiz, Director of Mathematics and Science Windham Public Schools

Senator Hartley, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee, My name is Rana Arshed Hafiz and I am the Director of Mathematics and Science of Windham Public Schools. On behalf of Windham Public Schools, I am here to offer support and perspective on S.B. No. 398, a bill before this Committee intended to examine employment transition in Eastern Connecticut. Our view is that this bill is a proactive and a necessary response to anticipated economic impacts in our region due to arrive over the next several years.

My opinion on this matter originates from my professional involvement in Northeastern Connecticut’s innovative Early College Opportunity Program (CT-ECO). I am associated with this program as a School District Administrator supporting its implementation.

CT-ECO is fashioned after the model developed by IBM and the New York State Department of Education, Pathways in Technology Early College High School Program (P-TECH), which bridges grades 9 through 14 by offering high school, college and career training into one seamless educational experience. The program is designed to meet the requirements for entry level positions in growth industries, and launch students into middle skill careers. The Eastern CT-ECO programs are part of a regional effort in the eastern portion of the state aimed at creating a pipeline of talented workers for the many manufacturers in the region. As such, both programs share the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA) with General Dynamic/Electric Boat serving as the lead as an industry partner. The two eastern programs are New London ECO, a partnership with New London Public Schools and Three Rivers Community College, and Windham ECO, a partnership with Windham Public Schools and Quinebaug Valley Community College.

Proactive workforce training can and will support people from all backgrounds. Most importantly, workforce training will prepare recent high school graduates with skill refinement and career direction. This bill would serve Connecticut students through our region’s Early College Opportunity (ECO) program being conducted in Windham and New London schools. ECO graduates will benefit by gaining the training and opportunities available to start their careers, as well through securing an Associate’s degree and foothold with an area employer through this innovative program.

I, therefore, recommend that this bill receive full attention by your committee, given its importance to the workforce system in Eastern Connecticut. Thank you.