

Testimony:

House Bill 5362: An Act Concerning Transparency Regarding Tuition Costs

Co-Chairs Bartolomeo and Willis, Rank Members Witkos and Betts, esteemed members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee:

My name is John Board. I'm a resident of the Town of Redding, District 135 & Senate District 36, I'm a Junior at Western Connecticut State University. I'm here to testify on House Bill 5362: An Act Concerning Transparency Regarding Tuition Costs.

We must ensure that our government, and has accountability and transparency; passage of this legislation will ensure University students will have confidence in starting to have a better understanding of where their money is coming from.

Students must become engaged with the political process if there is any chance of breaking the financial cycle of funding here at the Capitol. It's my firm believe that House Bill 5362 is a step in the right direction.

ConnSCU President Mark Ojakian has many challenges facing him including, but not limited to, tuition increases. As a way to minimize tuition increases I would encourage a "yea" vote on this legislation.

Students and parents deserve easy access to information about their college or university, especially as it relate to educational expenses. Members of this Assembly always encourage young people and students to become engaged. The best way to do so are to have an open line of communication and have a free flow of information. What students may choose to do with such information as it relates to line-item tuition increases notification is completely up to them, however they are entitled to this vital information.

As one of the authors of the bill's original draft, the purpose was to focus on the ConnCSU system and the Connecticut Board of Regents; however we all know that the University of Connecticut is facing similar problems. The ConnSCU Board of Regents and the UConn Board of Trustees pass administrative pay increases when the students either aren't looking or aren't allowed to look - discussed in executive session and voted on in public, a complete disregard for the student population or for Robert's Rules.

Bills like this are what Universities need - A commitment to transparency and accountability. Students should know what their money is being spent on and I implore that committee strongly considers this legislation and the positive impact it will have on the Connecticut Higher Education System.

Thank you.

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