



Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

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Testimony

Submitted By

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H.B. 5362, An Act Concerning Transparency Regarding Tuition Costs.

Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony today on *H.B. 5362, An Act Concerning Transparency Regarding Tuition Costs*.

Connecticut state statutes (10a-105 (g), 10a-99 (f), & 10a-77(f)) require UConn and the other public institutions of higher education to use a portion of their tuition revenue for need-based financial aid. As a result, UConn, the Connecticut State University System and the Community Colleges must set-aside not less than 15% of its tuition revenue to provide financial aid to Connecticut residents who qualify for need-based financial aid.

Tuition set-asides are a standard practice used by most universities across the country to finance financial aid programs. They help universities to increase accessibility by providing need-based financial aid, increase diversity and attract quality students. At UConn, the tuition set-aside has enabled us to increase accessibility, diversity and quality. In recent years, each incoming freshman class has set the bar higher for those coming afterward, and this year's freshman class was no exception. The class of 2019 is one of the most diverse in UConn's history, with one-third (32.3 percent) of its members representing students of color. This freshmen class had a mean SAT score of 1233 which is one of the highest average scores in our history. Also, we welcomed 172 valedictorians and salutatorians (all Connecticut residents to the class) and 50% of

the freshmen ranked in the top 10% of their high school class. Clearly an indication that the tuition set-aside is helping UConn reverse our state's "brain drain."

UConn dedicates 17% or nearly \$70M of its tuition revenue for need-based aid, which supports more than 7,000 Connecticut students attending UConn. The University's best financial aid packages are provided to in-state, low income students.

If this bill were to pass, Connecticut schools would have to disclose tuition set asides but not our out-of-state competitors, applicants and students may erroneously believe that UConn and other CT schools are overcharging to provide for a set-aside while out-of-state schools do not. We believe that passage of the bill would place Connecticut schools at a competitive disadvantage when trying to attract and retain students. It should be noted that UConn includes information on its website indicating that institutional grants and scholarships are supported from general tuition revenue.

We respectfully request that you oppose H.B. 5362. Thank you for your attention and your continued support of the University of Connecticut.