



**Testimony of Goodwin College in opposition to H.B. 5044 An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017, which seeks to further cut and consolidate the Governor's Scholarship Program.**

**Appropriations Committee  
February 10, 2016**

Goodwin College, a private non-profit higher educational institution located in East Hartford, with over 3,500 students (97% CT Residents) coming from 136 Connecticut cities and towns strongly opposes H.B. 5044 and any proposed cuts to the Governor's Scholarship Program (GSP) resulting from the consolidation of the Office of Higher Education Agency budget.

Many of our students are in a borderline poverty situation. In a typical year it is not uncommon to have approximately one-third of Goodwin students and their families categorized in the "\$0-\$0" Expected Family Contribution (EFC) range meaning they have few assets to help off-set the costs of their college education. Accordingly, the Governor's Scholarship Program is critical to those students' ability to begin, sustain and complete a college education.

That noted poverty level along with a high level of part-time students (87%) allows Goodwin to reach a significant number of needy students annually, which is a goal of the Governor's Scholarship Program.

In the two years prior to the 2015-16 school year, Goodwin College students received approximately \$1.8M annually from the Governor's Scholarship Program. In the year 2013-2014 some 1571 students were awarded funds with 1683 students receiving benefit in 2014-15. On average over the

course of those two years the average GSP award was approximately \$1,145.

In the 2015-16 school year, the CT Office of Higher Education (OHE) reduced GSP funding to Goodwin College by some \$854K or 48%. To date, approximately 1180 students have received Governor Scholarship Funding for 2015-16 with an average award of \$723. It is estimated that an additional 1200 students could receive an award if funding was available. This mirrored the situation of most Connecticut private colleges. To make matters worse, colleges (and students) were only made aware of the drastic cuts in August – too late for either to make alternate arrangements to make up the funding.

As a point of information, in the 2015-16 school year, the following municipalities had the highest concentration of Goodwin Students receiving Governor's Scholarship funding: Hartford, 153; East Hartford, 102; Manchester, 58; New Britain, 58; Waterbury, 41; Meriden, 39; Bristol, 37; New Haven, 30; Bloomfield, 29; Vernon, 28; Windsor, 28; Middletown, 24; Wethersfield, 24; Norwich, 23; Enfield, 22; Bridgeport, 20; West Hartford, 20.

Goodwin College is truly grateful to the CT General Assembly for its on-going support of CT's private college students through the funding of the Governor's Scholarship Program.

While we are quite aware of the State of Connecticut's fiscal challenges we urge the Appropriations Committee to sustain GSP funding and also limit the discretion of the OHE in disbursing such funds.

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