



Testimony for the Appropriations Committee

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Mitchell College

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On behalf of Mitchell College, I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 5022, AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017, which seeks to cut and consolidate the Governor's Scholarship Program.

We, as well as our students, are grateful for the legislature's ongoing support of our sector through maintaining funding of the Governor's Scholarship Program. Although the state is facing significant fiscal challenges and nearly every program may experience cuts of at least 5.75%, we ask you not to reduce the Governor's Scholarship any further.

Mitchell College is a small private institution which blends a tradition of mentoring with an expertise in teaching diverse learning styles. We have a nationally recognized program for students with learning differences. This teaching method of creating a highly individualized instruction model is shared with all our students whether enrolled in the program or not.

Over 60% of the student body at Mitchell College is from Connecticut. About 45% of those students are PELL eligible. Our institutions' allocation has already been reduced by over 50% since 2013 when the Governor's Scholarship was created. In 2012 our need based aid under the old program was \$528,371. For the 15/16 year it was reduced to \$210,727. In 2012, 232 students received need based aid from the state. This year we were only able to assist 90 with state need based aid. Please do not consolidate this grant program and do not give the Office of Higher Education (OHE) greater discretion to determine how much funding is allocated to this program. If the goal of the state is to retain students to become future Connecticut workers it must make a commitment to keep them in Connecticut schools. Some students will not thrive at large state institutions and need small institutions that can provide the individual support they need to become successful in their careers. Mitchell College wants to serve as partners with the state to provide low-income Connecticut students access and opportunities.