Southern Connecticut State University
SCSU
Stephen J. Hegedus, Ph.D.
DEAN, School of Education

**Testimony for the Education Committee**
**March 7, 2016**

On behalf of Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) I am submitting testimony in support of two bills, **S.B. 382 AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS** and **H.B. 5550 AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.**

**S.B. 382 AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS** seeks to require the Department of Education and the Office of Higher Education to enter into an agreement with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation for the purposes of accrediting and establishing standards for teacher preparation programs in the state. In recognition of the need for high quality standards for educator preparation programs within the state of Connecticut and the existence of an aligned system for program approval and national accreditation, we support the raised bill that Connecticut enters into a partnership agreement with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). This arrangement will provide guidance and support for continuous program improvement and sustain existing practices outlined in our CT-NCATE Partnership agreement which expires in December 2016.

Each of the approved educator preparation programs in Connecticut is unique, differentiated by mission and adaptation to regional needs. Given these differences in programs, the conditions for state approval and national accreditation should promote program effectiveness without jeopardizing individuality and innovation.

For educator preparation programs, I support the state entering into a partnership with CAEP that will promote excellence through an evidence-based, continuous improvement program that will advance our ability to prepare educators who are able to effectively educate P-12 students and to make positive contributions to the schools and communities in which they work.

I would ask the Committee to amend the bill language slightly to include private institutions and alternative providers as well as the public institutions as we currently go through a similar review process by the State Department of Education.

The faculty and staff at SCSU support this bill with such additions cited above as it aligns with its mission and vision for continuous improvement using rigorous and reliable assessments to prepare high quality and effective educators. Such unifying standards and aligned systems in our state will support SCSU given its breadth and diversity of educator preparation routes in initial and advanced programs.

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I strongly support Sections 2 and 3 of H.B. **5550 AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES** which seeks to extend the implementation date to 2018 for the requirement that an individual must possesses a master's degree in an appropriate subject matter area, as determined by the State Board of Education, related to such teacher's certification endorsement area.

The deadline extension is critical because the State Board of Education has not yet determined the guidelines as to what is an "appropriate subject matter area" even though the Board recently resolved that this should be 15 credits of coursework. Faculty and administrators will need this time to restructure its programs accordingly, teach out students in a timely and considerate manner under present regulations, and seek program approval as necessary. Given the demands that many practicing teachers have, their present mediocre salaries and the financial burden such legislation would impose on them now vs. over an extended period of time, I support such changes to the the act.

The faculty and staff at SCSU support this bill with such additions cited above as it aligns with its mission and vision for continuous improvement and its commitment to prepare many high quality and effective in-service teachers in a careful and considerate manner for the greater good of students in our CT schools.

Thank you for your consideration of both of these important bills.

**Stephen Hegedus, PhD**