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**Testimony for the
Education Committee
Jennifer Widness, President
Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
March 7, 2016**

On behalf of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges 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. The Deans of Education in this state have submitted written testimony as to why this is important. We would ask the Committee to amend the bill language slightly to include independent institutions as well as the public institutions as we currently go through a similar review process by the State Department of Education and should be held to the same standards.

We also 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 for the requirement that an individual must possess 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 failed to adopt guidelines as to what is an "appropriate subject matter area." When this law was adopted in 2012, four years was provided for implementation. This would have been a sufficient amount of time if the State Board had acted in an appropriate timeframe to define what was deemed appropriate. Now the deadline looms just a few months away and guidelines have not been agreed to.

Students currently enrolled in master's degree programs who do not obtain their initial certification by July 1 of this year may be required to obtain a second

Albertus Magnus College
Connecticut College
Fairfield University
Goodwin College
Mitchell College
Quinnipiac University
Rensselaer at Hartford
Sacred Heart University
St. Vincent's College
Trinity College
University of Bridgeport
University of Hartford
University of New Haven
University of Saint Joseph
Wesleyan University
Yale University

master's degree or additional credits if their current program does not comply with the guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education. Further, current master's degree programs need some time to prepare to modify their programs accordingly. CCIC member institutions hope the State Board of Education acts in the next few weeks and then, with passage of this bill, institutions will have sufficient time to implement those changes and ensure current students are not negatively impacted by the delay.

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