



Testimony for the
Education Committee
Jess House, President
American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education-Connecticut
March 7, 2016

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education-Connecticut (AACTE-CT), 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 ensure that educator preparation programs in Connecticut will meet the rigorous standards and accreditation requirements of this national body, provide guidance and support for continuous program improvement, and sustain existing practices outlined in the current 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.

The membership of our organization (AACTE-CT) consists of the public and private educator preparation programs in Connecticut, and we strongly support the state entering into a partnership with CAEP that will promote excellence through an evidence-based, continuous improvement program. This 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.

AACTE-CT asks the Committee to amend the bill language slightly to include private institutions and alternative providers, along with the public institutions. We believe that all educator preparation programs should go through a similar program approval process by the State Department of Education.

AACTE-CT strongly supports 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 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 not yet determined the guidelines as to what is an "appropriate subject matter area." Faculty and administrators will need this time to restructure their 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 rather than over an extended period of time, AACTE-CT supports such changes to the the act.

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

Sincerely,



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