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**Testimony for the  
Appropriations Committee of  
Jennifer Widness, President  
Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges  
February 15, 2018**

On behalf of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges I am submitting testimony on the Governor's budget recommendations pertaining to the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program.

First, I want to thank you for your ongoing support for the Scholarship Program despite the significant fiscal challenges our state has been facing. We cannot afford any additional cuts to this program as Connecticut already lags the national average in the amount of funding for state student aid per pupil, the average grant size and the percent of higher education state funding spend on student aid. (See Figures 1, 2 & 3).

In addition, despite a significant reduction in funding for Connecticut students attending Connecticut independent colleges over the past few years (see Figures 4 & 5), we are grateful that access to this program continues for Connecticut students that attend both public *and* private non-profit colleges in this state. As you know, the independent colleges play a significant role in educating our state's citizens:

- They award nearly 50% of the bachelor's degrees earned each year in Connecticut and over 60% of the graduate degrees earned.
- They award 54% of the bachelor's degrees earned by minority students.
- At seven of our member institutions, over 40% of the freshman class that enrolled in 2016 was from Connecticut (at four of these institutions, over 90% of the freshman class was from Connecticut).

Not only are our institutions educating our state's citizenry, they are awarding the majority of the degrees earned in the disciplines most needed by our state's employers: engineering, computer science, bioscience and the health professions. (see Figure 6). CCIC member institutions are also working to expand their STEM degree programs and tighten connectivity between employers and the institutions to ensure we are producing the talent needed for our economy to thrive.

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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

As the legislature grapples this session with how to ensure we have the talent needed for our state's employers, funding for the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program for Connecticut students at public and private colleges must remain part of that strategy. All of our state's higher education institutions must be considered part of the solution.

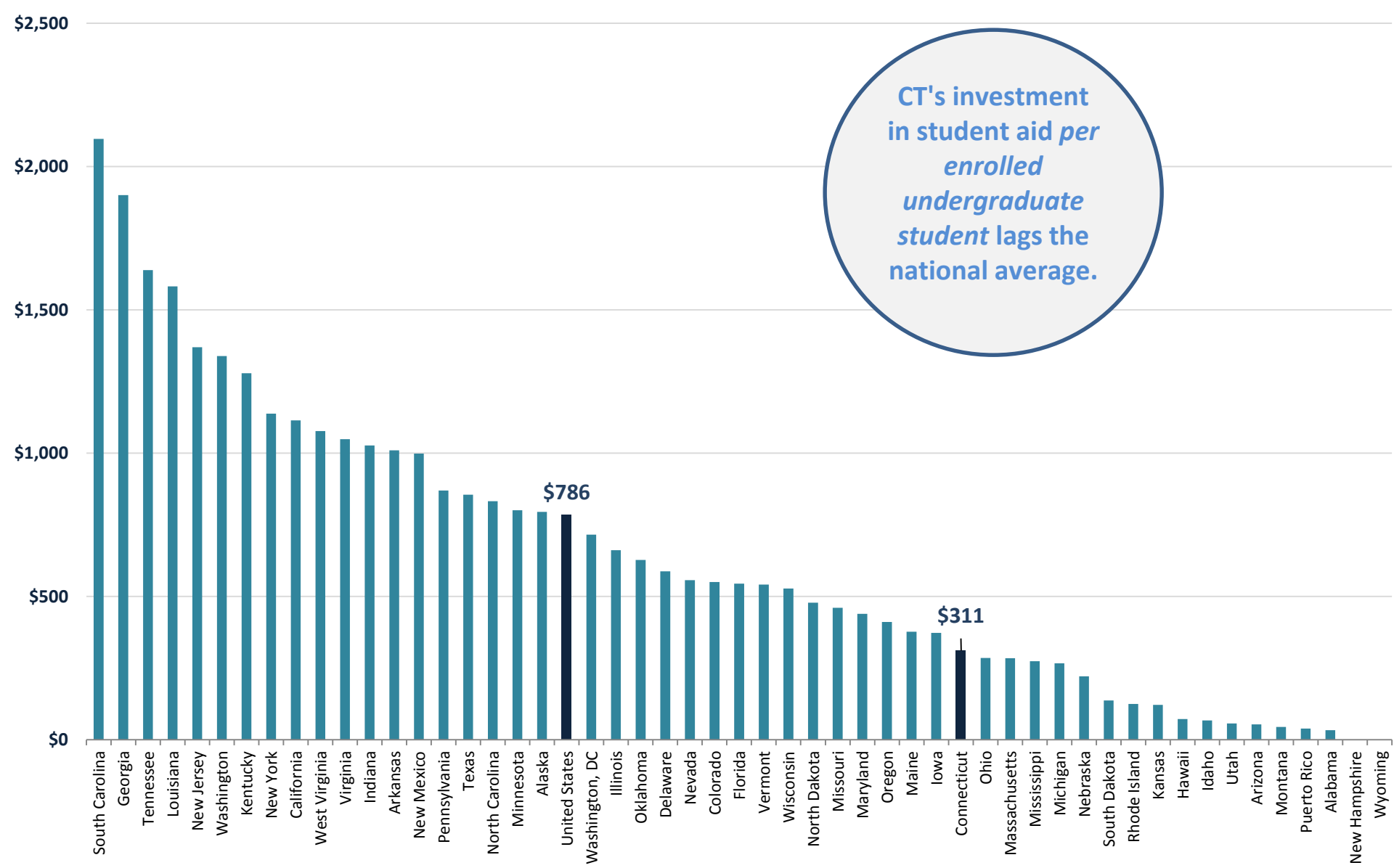
Recent data compiled through the state's Preschool through Twenty Workforce Information Network (P20 WIN) shows that the percentage of students that stay in state to work upon graduation correlates more with the percentage of Connecticut residents that enroll at the institution than the type of institution (see Figure 7). In fact, the University of St. Joseph and Goodwin College graduates are employed in Connecticut at ***a higher rate*** than the CSCU and Community Colleges graduates.

We understand that very significant fiscal challenges remain but for the reasons outlined above, along with many other, we ask that you maintain funding for the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program. Students and their families, as well as the state's economy, cannot afford further reductions to this important program.

# Estimated Undergraduate State Grant Dollars per Undergraduate Enrollment, by State: 2015-16

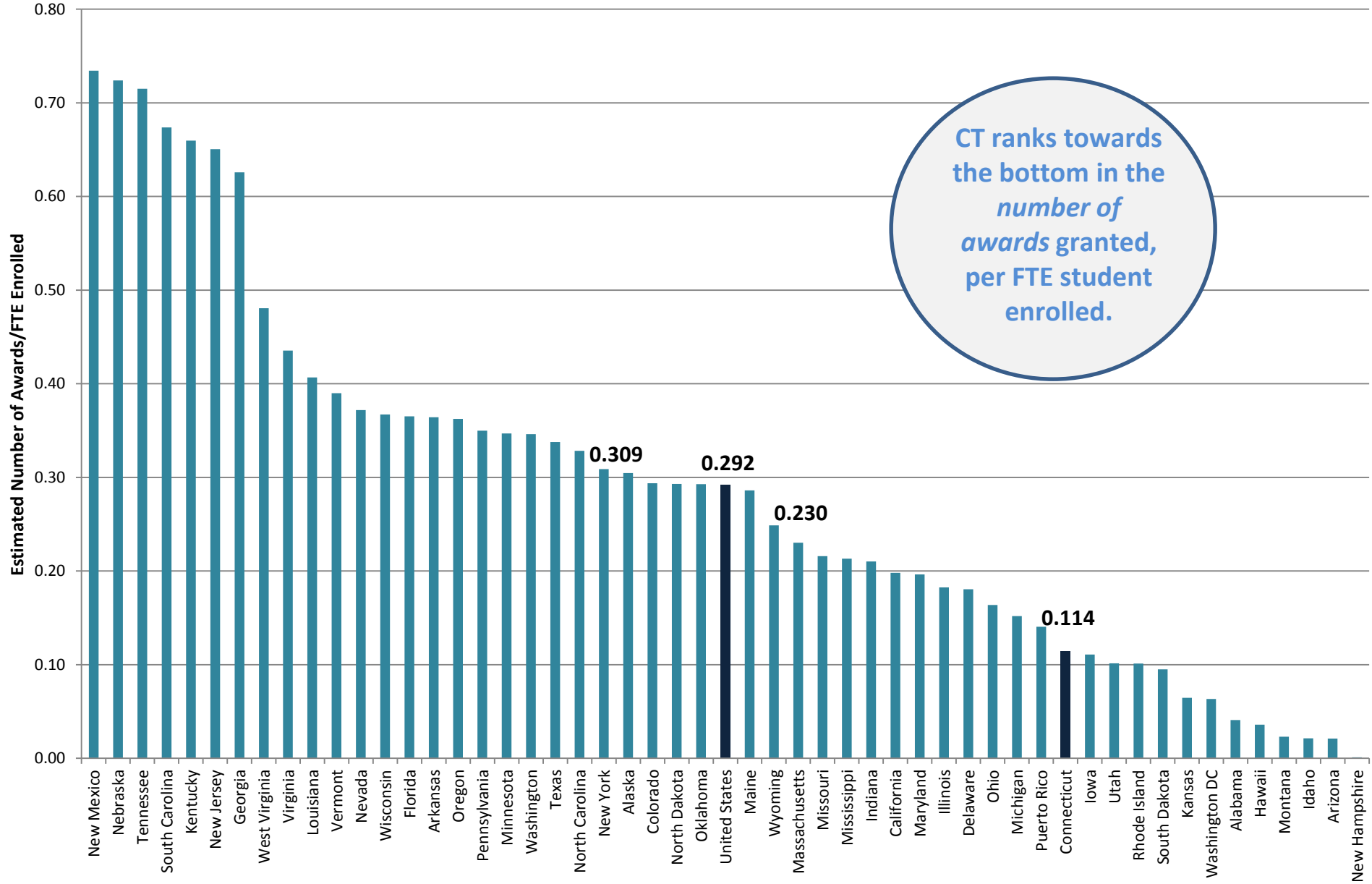
Source: National Association State Student Grant Aid Program (NASSGAP)

CT's investment in student aid *per enrolled undergraduate student* lags the national average.



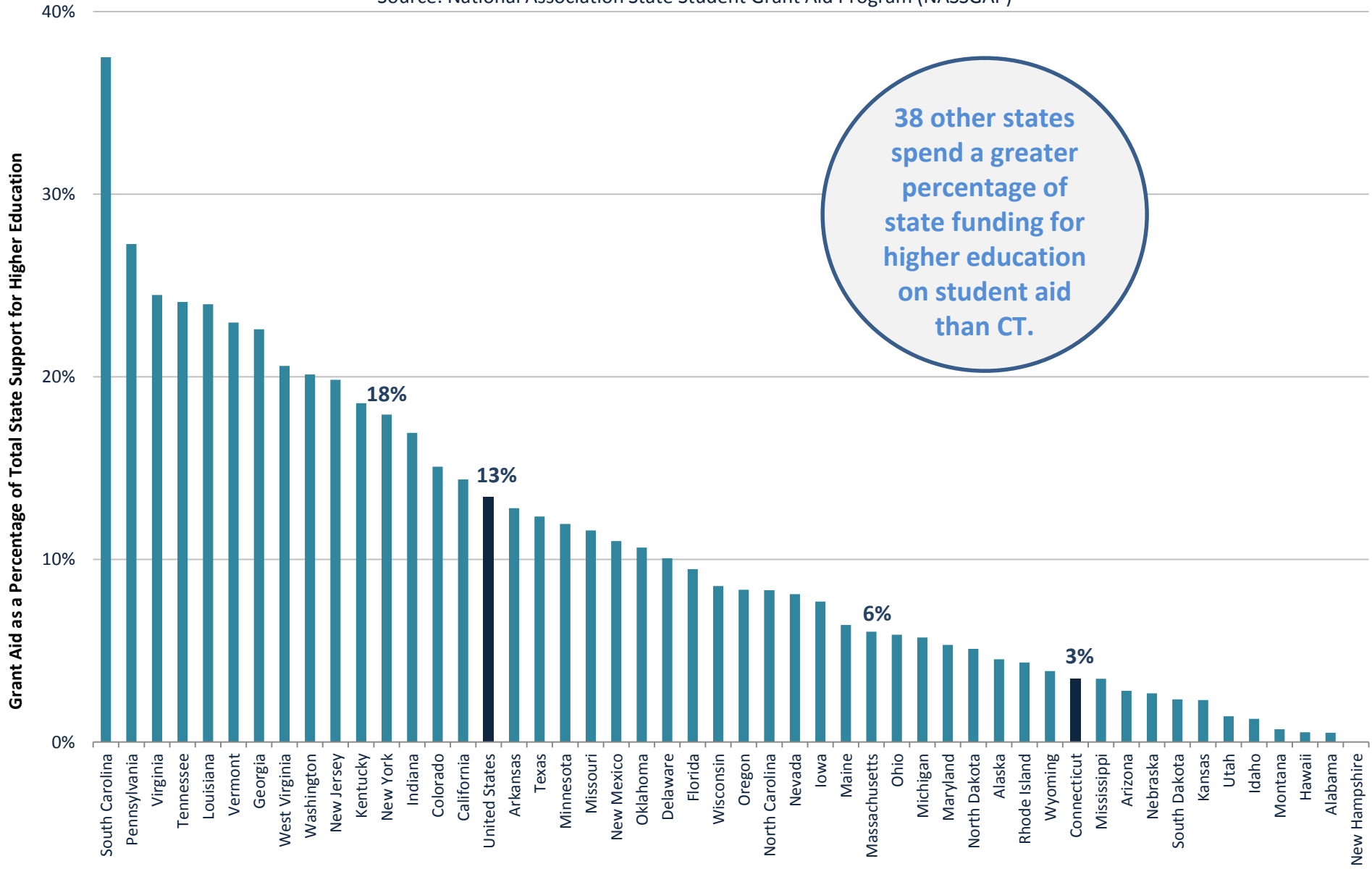
# Estimated Total Number of Awards per Full-time Equivalent Enrollment, by State: 2015-16

Source: National Association State Student Grant Aid Program (NASSGAP)



# State Grant Expenditures as a Percentage of State Fiscal Support for Higher Education Operating Expenses, by State: 2015-16

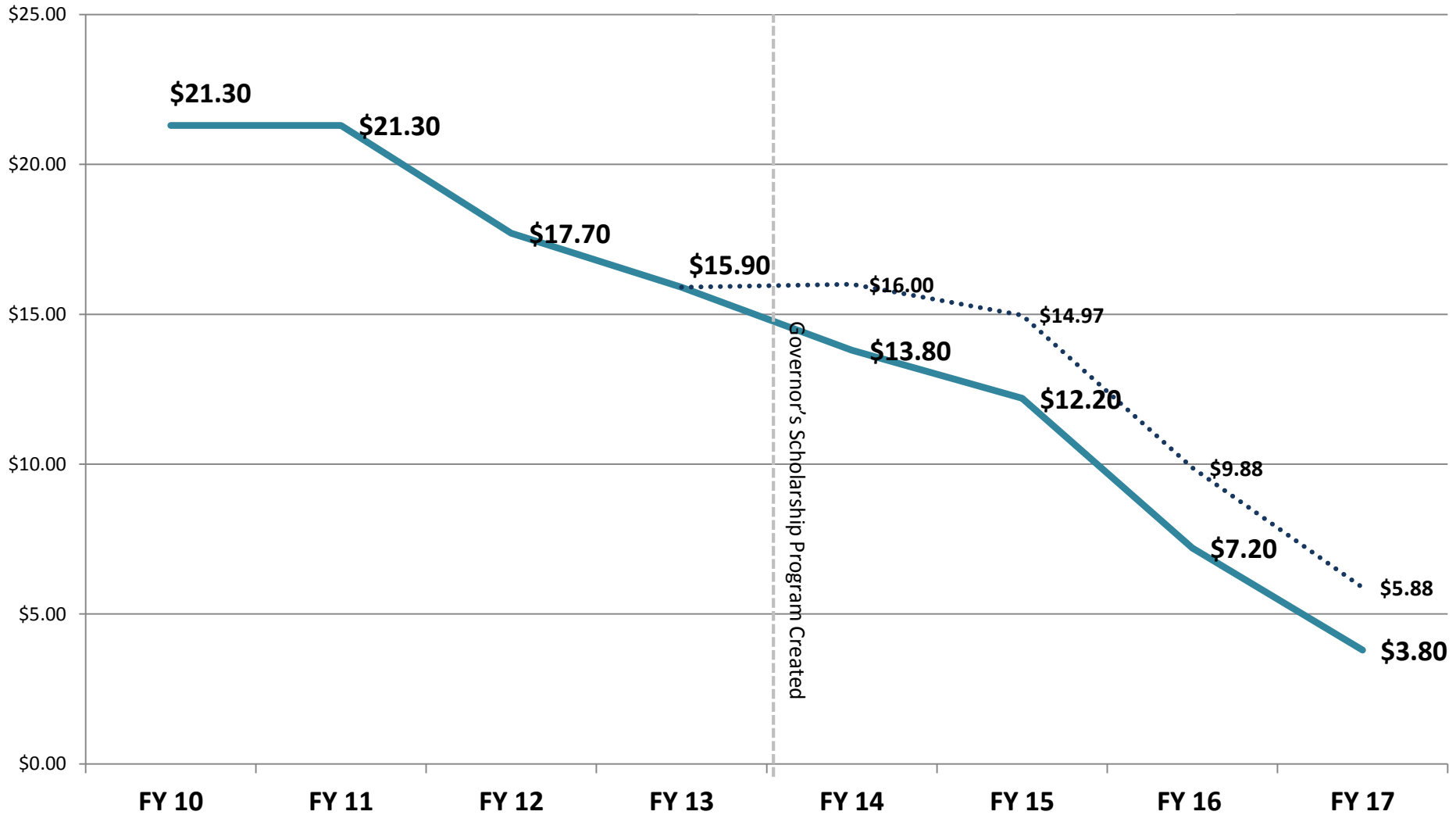
Source: National Association State Student Grant Aid Program (NASSGAP)



# State Need-based Aid Awarded to CT Undergraduates at CCIC Member Institutions: FY 10 to FY 17

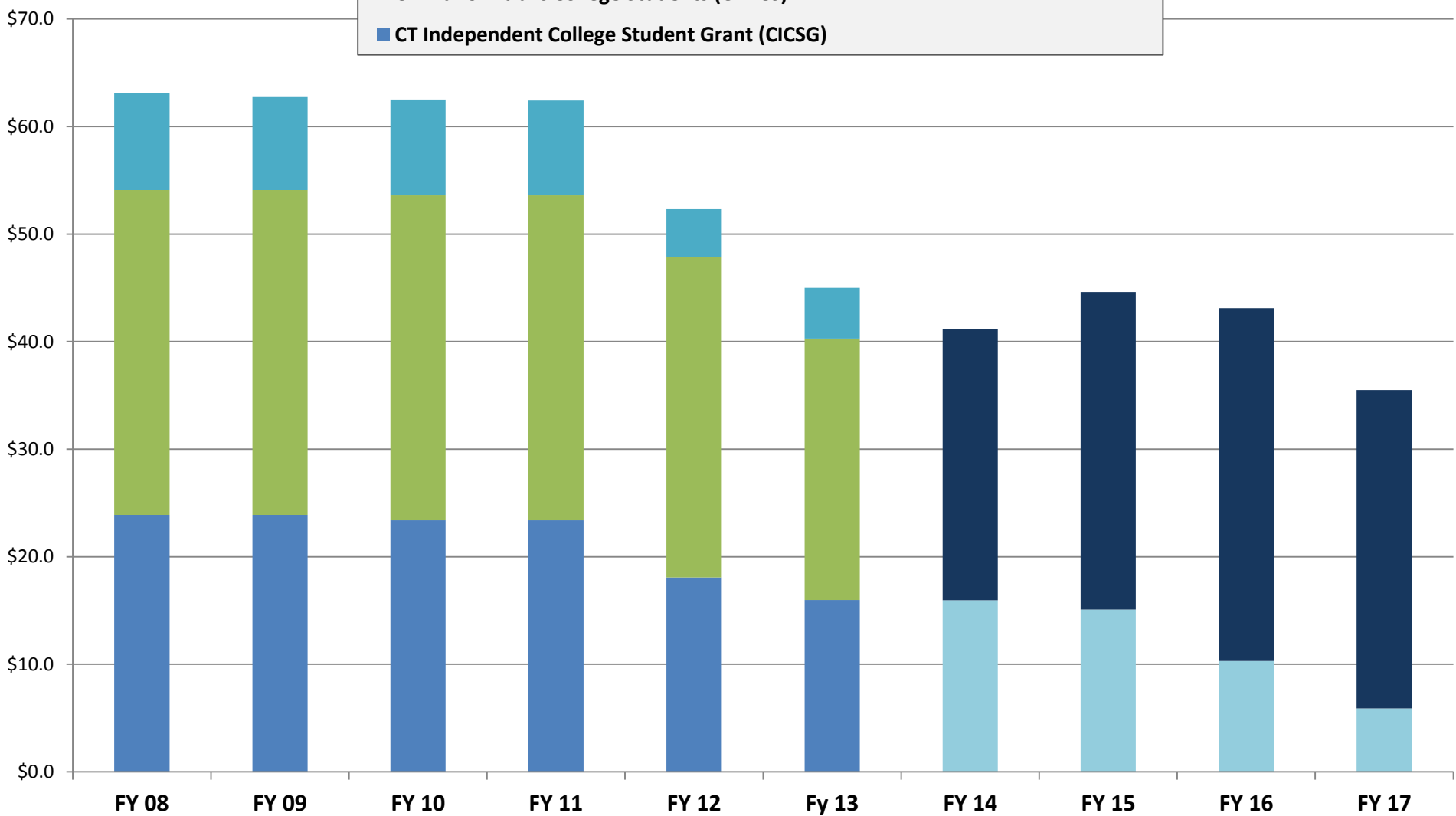
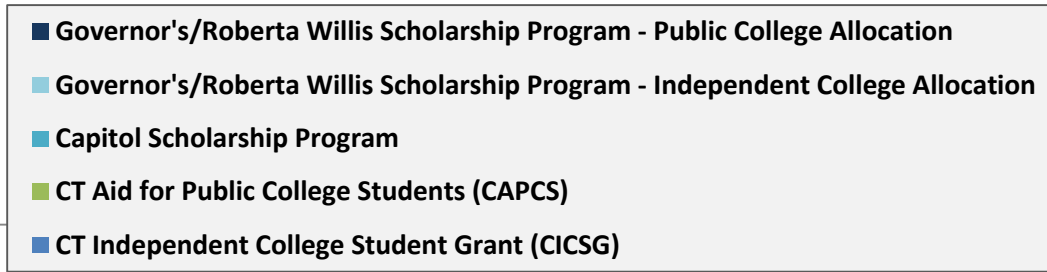
Source: OHE

- Need-based Aid
- ..... Need-based & Need-merit Aid (combined)



# Funding for State Financial Aid Programs: FY 07 - FY 17

Source: OFA Budget Books & OHE



# Percent of Statewide Industry Cluster Degrees Awarded by Connecticut Independent Colleges in 2016-17: Bachelor's Degrees and Above

Figure 6

Source: IPEDS Data Center

Computer and  
Information Sciences &  
Support Services  
71.2%

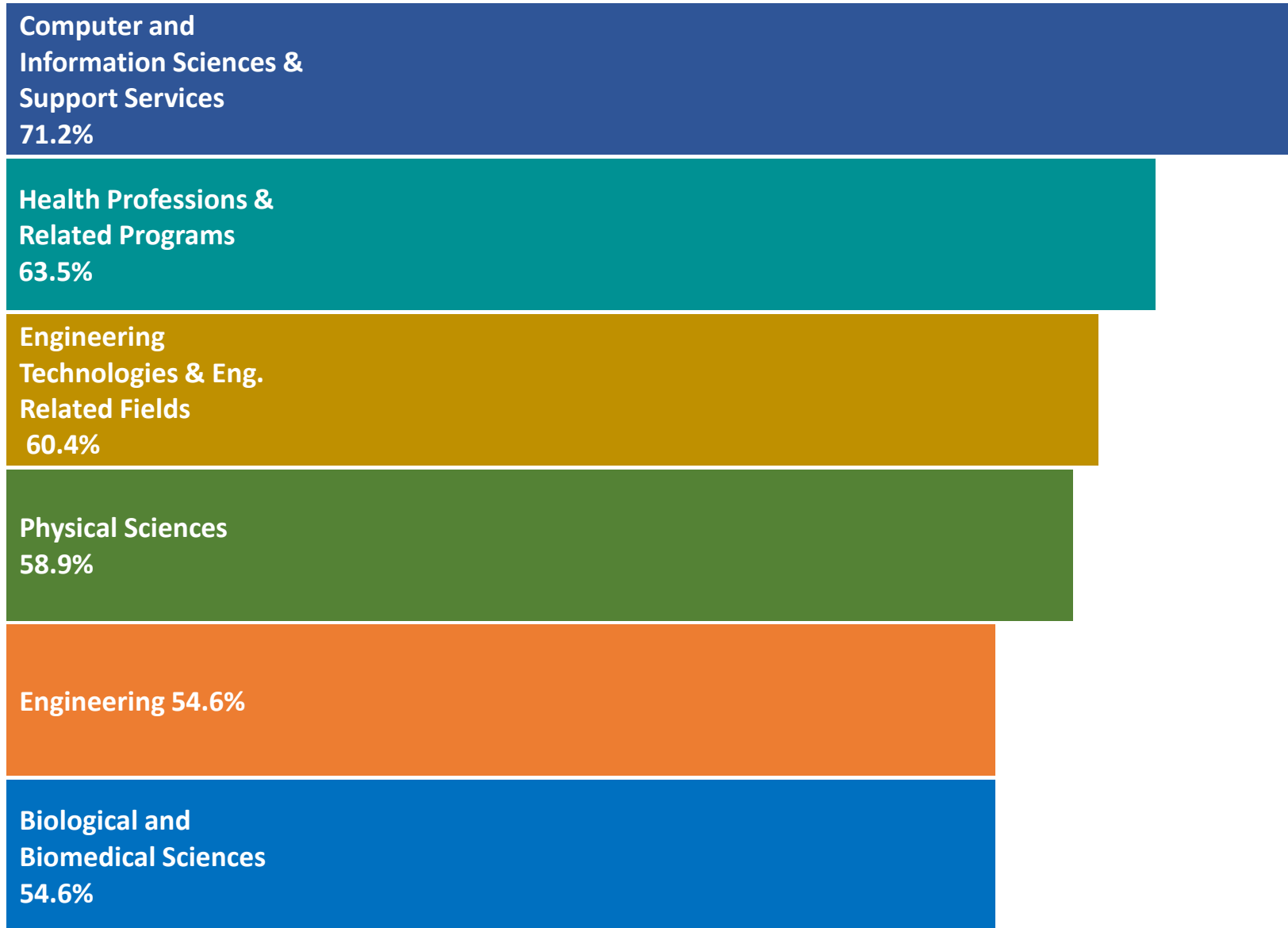
Health Professions &  
Related Programs  
63.5%

Engineering  
Technologies & Eng.  
Related Fields  
60.4%

Physical Sciences  
58.9%

Engineering 54.6%

Biological and  
Biomedical Sciences  
54.6%





# Percent of CT Residents Enrolled in an Institution Compared to Percent of Graduates from that Institution Working in CT 3 Quarters After Graduation

Source: cicu-IRPS, CT Dept. of Labor 2015 Legislative Report Card & P20 WIN

