



## State of Connecticut Office of Higher Education

Testimony of  
Timothy D. Larson  
Executive Director, Office of Higher Education  
before the  
Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee  
Thursday, February 20, 2020

Senator Haskell, Representative Haddad, Senator Hwang, Representative Hall, and distinguished members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on **Senate Bill - 103 AN ACT CONCERNING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, House Bill 5111- AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN INDUSTRIES WITH A HIRING NEED IN THE STATE, House Bill 5116 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION, and House Bill 5117 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION STATUTES.**

While the Office of Higher Education supports increased work-based learning opportunities within Connecticut, the agency respectfully suggests that the task force which would be created by HB 5111 is unnecessary at this time. Per the Governor's Executive Order 4 and his budget recommendations in SB 8, the Governor has launched the Governor's Workforce Council (GWC) to study and plan for the state's workforce needs and is proposing to overhaul the Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) to improve oversight and alignment of the state's workforce system. The GWC is charged by the

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Executive Order to, in part, “Improve opportunities for work-based, credit-bearing and non-credit bearing learning such as internships, apprenticeships and project-based learning with workplace application. Increase access to portable and transferable dual-credit coursework in high schools.” The remit of the GWC both overlaps with and is broader than that for the task force proposed in this legislation, which the agency believes makes the task force unnecessary at this time. The Office of Higher Education is actively engaged with the GWC and looks forward to continue working with the GWC, OWC, and legislators on improving access to work-based learning opportunities in our state.

The Office of Higher Education supports **HB 5117** as it makes minor technical changes to the current long-distance learning statute.

The Office of Higher Education also supports the committee’s efforts to study issues impacting the state’s higher education system in **SB 103** and **HB 5116**.