

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5112

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET OF THE CONNECTICUT STATE

Title: COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

Vote Date: 3/3/2020

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/27/2020

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to increase the financial transparency of the Board of Regents for Higher Education by requiring the addition of the central office budget when preparing the request to the Office of Policy and Management.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Mark Ojakian, President, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities](#): The CSCU submitted testimony in opposition of this bill. Mr. Ojakian writes that the Board of Regents is required by their accreditation standards to retain appropriate autonomy in budget and finance matters, and to make budgetary determinations based on multi-year financial planning. In addition, the information needed to support the Board of Regents' decisions on tuition and campus spending would not be available until 6 months after the OPM budget request deadline.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Maureen Chalmers, President, Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges](#): The Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges is in support of this bill because they believe that there needs to be more financial transparency in the CSCU budget. They believe that the CSCU should not have the authority to spend what the legislature has appropriated to colleges and universities.

[Lauren Doninger, Professor, Gateway Community College](#): Dr. Doninger submitted testimony in support of this bill. She writes that despite the Board of Regents receiving a \$400,000

block grant, the BOR has spent over \$47 million with little transparency. She believes that this spending has siphoned resources from Connecticut colleges and universities at the expense of student services.

[Diba Khan-Bureau, Program Coordinator, Three Rivers Community College](#): Ms. Khan-Bureau is in support of this bill because she believes the Board of Regents should be operating with complete transparency. She writes that this bill will eliminate any question of where money is being spent.

[Lillian Maisfehlt, Librarian, Gateway Community College](#): Ms. Maisfehlt submitted testimony in support of this bill. She writes that spending by the Board of Regents in FY2020 has drained resources from the students of Connecticut colleges and universities, despite assurances from the CSCU and BOR that student-facing services would not be impacted by the consolidation plan.

[Patty O'Neill, President, Connecticut State University American Association of University Professors](#): The CSU-AAUP is in support of this bill because it will preserve the funding of block grants and prevent the Board of Regents from spending what has been appropriated to Connecticut colleges and universities. Dr. O'Neill writes that increased transparency is needed of the Board of Regents.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

See response from agency.

Reported by: Assistant Clerk Krystin DeLucia Date: March 4, 2020