



Written Testimony Submitted by
Chancellor David G. Carter
Connecticut State University System
Before the Committee on
Higher Education and Employment Advancement
Tuesday, March 4, 2008

Due to previous commitments, I am unable to appear before you today, but I wanted to submit comments for your consideration on a number of bills before the committee today.

Senate Bill 466, An Act Establishing the Learn Here, Live Here Program

The bill allows graduates from a Connecticut institution of higher education or regional vocational-technical high school to “bank” dollars that they would have paid in state income tax for up to 10 years and use it for the purpose of buying a first home. I support the concept of the First-Time Homebuyers Fund because it serves as an incentive for the young people of Connecticut to be educated in the State and then remain in the State to live and work.

There are more than 35,000 students who attend the four universities of the Connecticut State University System. Ninety-three percent of them are Connecticut residents and 86 percent remain in the State after graduation. This Program will help to provide them with an opportunity to own their own home.

Senate Bill 409, An Act Concerning Community-Technical College Transfer Scholarships

This bill requires the Department of Higher Education to develop and administer a pilot program to provide scholarships to Community College students who transfer to the University of Connecticut or to the Connecticut State University System. Although I do not have many details about the proposal, the idea appears interesting. As you know, it is the highest priority for me as Chancellor and for the Board of Trustees at the Connecticut State University System to ensure the seamless transfer of Community College students to continue their education with us.

I assume the pilot would limit the number of students initially; but transfers from the CCCs to CSUS continue to grow each year. In 2001, there were 880 CCC students transferring and just 5 years later, it hit a high of 1152. Our efforts to develop a system-to-system articulation agreement will bolster these numbers, which in turn would impact CSUS far more than it would the University of Connecticut, for instance. We remain concerned about the unmet financial needs of the students that spend their entire postsecondary experience with CSUS universities. I would be happy to discuss the details of this proposal further and in addition, fully assess impact on our students.

House Bill 5611, An Act Concerning Municipal Bonding to Permit Towns to Fund Scholarship Funds for Residents

I applaud the proponents of the bill for bringing forth this concept. It is fashioned after the Kalamazoo Promise, a successful program that used private investments for scholarships to encourage residents of Kalamazoo to go on to college. Such a program has spurred housing growth in Kalamazoo, increased graduation rates and helped to revitalize the region.

This proposal would allow a municipality to issue bonds to establish a trust for the purpose of scholarships for qualified students who have attended school within the municipality to attend any Connecticut public university or community college.

I support the intent of the bill – that is, to inspire those individuals who might not otherwise have gone to college. The New England 2020 Report indicates that by the year 2020, half of the young working population (ages 25-29) in Connecticut will be from underrepresented groups and not prepared with the education or skills necessary to be successful in our society. This necessitates a creative approach to attract, develop and retain a well educated citizenry- the state's future depends on it.

House Bill 5688, An Act Concerning the Centralization and Development of a Junior Worker Enterprises Program.

The bill establishes a work-study program for full-time students providing practical off-campus education and job experience through internships, cooperatives and on-the-job training at state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and small and medium-sized for-profit companies located in the state. I applaud the proponents of the bill because I firmly believe that getting a substantive internship during your college career only serves to enhance the postsecondary educational experience. To this end, we offer many such opportunities at Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities.

House Bill 5755, An Act Concerning a Requirement of Instruction in Social and Emotional Development and Learning of Children as Part of Teacher Preparation.

The bill requires that after July 1, 2009, candidates for teacher preparation courses complete coursework instruction on the relationship between a child's social and emotional development and learning. It has become quite clear that if we are to respond effectively to the educational challenges that confront us, we must do so comprehensively. That certainly means strengthening connections across the education continuum, from pre-K through higher education, and it means establishing effective partnerships with families in the education of children. Beyond this it requires us to change the way we prepare teachers.

In fact, we are looking forward to pursuing precisely that approach, as part of an innovative initiative underway at Western Connecticut State University, working with the school districts in Danbury and Bethel. That program – *Building A Bridge to Improve Student Success* – has already seen significant results in college readiness, reducing the number of students needing remedial courses at the start of their freshman year, and increasing retention of students after freshman year. Now, we're planning to work with those districts in a new way.

We are working with Dr. James P. Comer, the Maurice Falk Professor of Child Psychiatry at Yale's School of Medicine, and Director of the School Development Program at the Yale Child Study Center. Dr. Comer's group is in the midst of developing a plan that will enable us to augment our work with regard to (1) parent engagement, (2) classroom management, and (3) instructional delivery to today's students. We plan to incorporate their expertise into the collaboration we have between the faculty at Western and those in the Danbury and Bethel School Districts. And we are excited about the potential of this collaboration, for those students, and for our state.

Over the next two years, the Bridges Program model will be utilized first by Southern Connecticut State University and then by both Central and Eastern Connecticut State Universities in partnership with school districts in their areas of the state. At the same time, we will be working with Dr. Comer to change the instructional delivery and ensure that faculty and teachers preparing to enter the classroom understand the importance of social and emotional development.

Senate Bill 467, An Act Concerning Security Protocol at the Constituent Units

The bill requires that the Department of Higher Education, in consultation with the constituent units, develop a uniform security protocol. Chief Joseph Dooley of the Southern Connecticut State University Police has provided the committee with testimony on behalf of the Connecticut State University System regarding this proposal.

Senate Bill 470, An Act Concerning the Shortage of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals

The bill establishes a faculty scholarship for service program to encourage residents qualified to become faculty members of a nursing or allied health education program. It also provides for loan forgiveness for those nurses or allied health educators who become faculty members and remain in the state for five years.

I applaud the proponents of this bill because there is a significant nursing faculty shortage in Connecticut. For the 2004-2005 year, 50% of nursing programs reported faculty shortages, and Connecticut has a current nursing education faculty anticipated retirement rate of 23% over the next five years.

More than 2,000 qualified nursing applicants were denied entrance into Connecticut nursing programs in 2005 due to a lack of resources, including faculty shortages. The State Legislature provided \$295,000 in funding for scholarship and 3 additional positions (one for WCSU and two for SCSU) in FY 2008 to begin addressing the System's faculty shortage. This project provides resources for the System to provide graduate education and prepare students to pursue further education to become nursing faculty.

House Bill 5687, An Act Concerning the Nursing Profession

This bill expands the nursing student loan forgiveness program to include recruitment of nurses for state correctional facilities and for the Connecticut Valley Hospital. Such loan forgiveness programs are helpful as they encourage students to pursue nursing degrees. Connecticut faces a significant nursing shortage. The Connecticut League for Nursing report (2005) suggests that Connecticut ranks 49th out of 50 states in producing nurses at only 19 per 100,000, while the national average is 31 per 100,000. In 2005 Connecticut faced a 20% shortage of RNs. By 2010, this shortage is projected to increase to 33% and by 2020 the shortage is expected to be 57%. At current graduation rates Connecticut is projected to have the second greatest decline in the supply of nurses nationally, significantly impacting the safety of patient care.

The Connecticut State University finds that incentives such as scholarship and loan forgiveness programs are effective in providing much needed financial support to students to enter the nursing profession and for those already holding nursing degrees, to continue their academic careers and become faculty members.

The CSUS has graduated the most nurses with Bachelors Degrees in the State of Connecticut during the past five years and is a critical pipeline to address the State's severe nursing workforce shortage. As such, the CSUS has a keen interest in ensuring that we can meet the demands to educate those that want to become nurses with a sufficient number of highly qualified faculty. In order to accomplish this I have provided Attachment A – which is a comprehensive plan for CSUS to add both faculty and scholarships.

Senate Bill 410, An Act Concerning the Waiver of Fees for Veterans at Community-Technical Colleges, the Connecticut State University System and the University of Connecticut

The Connecticut State University System is proud to provide educational opportunities to veterans through waiver of tuition at our four universities: Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities. We have extended this benefit approximately 728 times to veterans attending full time in FY 2008. Beyond this, the Board of Trustees has extended over 579 fee waivers to veterans attending part time in the same time period.

As you know, Section 10a-99(d) of the Connecticut General Statutes, extends tuition waivers to any dependent child of a person whom the armed forces of the United States has declared to be missing in action or to have been a prisoner of war while serving in such armed forces after January 1, 1960; any veteran having served in time of war, as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, or who served in either a combat or combat support role in the invasion of Grenada, October 25, 1983, to December 15, 1983, the invasion of Panama, December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990, or the peace-keeping mission in Lebanon, September 29, 1982, to March 30, 1984; or any active member of the Connecticut Army or Air National Guard enrolled in an undergraduate degree-granting program.

Section 10a-99(f) requires that the System's Operating Fund be reimbursed (through an annual appropriation) for the amount by which the tuition waivers granted exceeds 2 ½% of tuition revenue. The intent of this section is to neutralize the fiscal impact of such waivers by reimbursing the CSUS for a portion of these expenditures (faculty and related costs to educate the students). However, as you can see from the Chart below, such reimbursements have never been made and as a result, the Universities must absorb these costs. Unfortunately, with the number of veterans increasing due to global conflicts, the amount of waivers granted have (and will continue to) increase. This will put additional strains on already limited resources.

Historical Summary of Tuition Waiver Reimbursement

| | Actual/ Projected | 2.5% of Projected | Reimbursement Required | Actual |
|---------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Tuition Waivers | Tuition Revenues | By State Statute | Reimbursement Received |
| 1996-97 | \$ 1,292,950 | \$ 1,040,983 | \$ 251,967 | \$ - |
| 1997-98 | \$ 1,326,485 | \$ 1,053,154 | \$ 273,331 | \$ - |
| 1998-99 | \$ 1,241,284 | \$ 1,097,315 | \$ 143,969 | \$ - |
| 1999-00 | \$ 1,139,018 | \$ 1,151,850 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2000-01 | \$ 987,251 | \$ 1,173,036 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2001-02 | \$ 891,862 | \$ 1,360,039 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2002-03 | \$ 908,320 | \$ 1,455,750 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2003-04 | \$ 1,035,526 | \$ 1,679,092 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2004-05 | \$ 1,282,469 | \$ 1,873,912 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2005-06 | \$ 1,339,259 | \$ 2,024,761 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2006-07 | \$ 1,426,299 | \$ 2,179,720 | \$ - | \$ - |
| 2007-08 | \$ 1,530,835 | \$ 2,299,170 | \$ - | \$ - |
| | \$14,401,558 | \$16,096,926 | \$ 669,267 | |

CSUS is proud to honor any waivers for those brave citizens that have served our country that are supported by the General Assembly. However, we would respectfully request that they also be accompanied by an offsetting General Fund Appropriation to defray the additional cost pressures that will result. In the case of this proposed bill, a waiver of fees as well as tuition for veterans is estimated to result in additional lost revenue to CSUS of between \$1.8 million and \$5.1 million in FY2009, depending on how many veterans opted to live on campus and take food service; and this assumption only takes into account the number of veterans currently being served by CSUS. The number would increase if more veterans chose to avail themselves of this opportunity.

Attachment A

**Connecticut State University System
Proposal to Address Nursing Shortages**

Fiscal Year 2009

Background

The Connecticut State University System is seeking \$1,758,920 for the second year of a system-wide project to address the issue of nurses and nursing faculty shortages in the state of Connecticut. This would be in addition to the \$295,000 State appropriation received in FY 2008. The nursing shortage has a significant impact on healthcare and safety of all Connecticut residents. Nursing programs in Connecticut must begin this process now, to provide a competent nursing workforce to meet present and future healthcare demands of the state.

This proposal helps address that shortage by increasing the capacity of the Connecticut State University System to educate and graduate nursing students, and provide graduate training opportunities. It will provide additional training for RN students to get their BSN degree, and for BSN graduates to pursue a master's degree. Updating the professional credentials of nurses allows those nurses to provide better medical care in the state. Approximately 95 percent of graduating nurses at Southern and Western remain in the state.

Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU)

Southern Connecticut State University is requesting funding to increase the number of graduates with both a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) and an MSN (Master of Science in Nursing) degree. The strategy that Southern will use to increase the number of students pursuing the BSN is the development of a new Accelerated Second Degree Program. Increasing the number of graduates with the MSN degree will be accomplished by offering scholarships to those who otherwise would not be able to leave their gainful employment to pursue this higher degree. In both cases, funding is critical to their success. State funding will support scholarships and support for additional nursing faculty positions. The funding provided to SCSU in FY 2008 (a total of \$155,615) will be used to distribute \$130,415 in scholarships and stipends to 24 ACE students for the Fall 2008 semester. This would cover approximately half of their total tuition for nursing courses. The remaining dollars (\$25,200) will be used to hire a laboratory coordinator for the Spring 2008 semester.

In addition, SCSU also received a State appropriation in FY 2008 for two full-time nursing faculty for the Accelerated Career Entry (ACE) Program. The State also appropriated \$100,000 to SCSU for stipends and scholarships for the ACE and MSN Programs for FY 2008 and FY 2009. In Fall 2007, \$49,201 in scholarship funds were distributed to 16 graduate students pursuing the Master of Science degree with specialty in Nursing Education.

In the Spring 2008 semester, the approximately \$50,000 remaining will be divided between graduate students and accelerated (ACE) students. There will about 12 graduate students (some are completing all degree requirements in fall) and 15 accelerated students who will benefit from these funds.

Additional State funding would allow Southern to expand the Accelerate Career Entry Program, launched in the fall of 2007 by admitting students who already have a college degree in another field and wish to pursue nursing as a career. This program enables college graduates to earn a BSN in about 12-15 months and will represent a 33% annual increase in the number of individuals receiving BSN degrees from Southern. The program has strong institutional support at Southern, but requires additional money to continue funding scholarships and support staff. Once staff are hired, Southern will identify new, existing, or reallocated funds to continue the program.

On the graduate level, Southern offers a program that includes online courses for individuals with a BSN degree to continue their education and get an MSN degree. Helping address the state's severe nursing faculty shortage, the nursing department has embarked on a collaborative effort with Western Connecticut State University to help prepare more nurse educators to obtain an MSN degree. Through grants received from Department of Higher Education (DHE), Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), and Connecticut Health, Education and Finance Authority (CHEFA), two of the nursing education courses at the Master's level at Southern were converted to online delivery and offered through this method for the first time in fall 2004. State funds would allow for the development and implementation of additional online courses to make the program even more accessible.

Southern is in the second year of offering Nursing courses online. With an infusion of federal funding, the online Nursing program can be expanded significantly. The increased availability of these online courses would facilitate the nursing students with a BSN to continue their education to get their MSN. The students would also be required to enroll in some traditional classes at the University to ensure mastery of the content and for hands-on experiences.

Once students complete their MSN degree they would not only be better prepared to provide higher quality patient services, they would also be prepared to teach in an RN Associates Degree program. With some teaching experience, these individuals could potentially be hired part time or full time Nursing faculty in a four-year program. Increasing the number of MSN students would allow Southern to train more nurses to become faculty and thus help ease the faculty shortage and the nursing shortage because there will more faculty prepared to teach the next generation of nurses. Those who earn the MSN may, with the right kind of support, decide to pursue a doctoral degree.

Western Connecticut State University (WCSU)

In the last few years, there has been continued pressure on Western to increase its admission of students into its major nursing program. However, the number of students applying to the nursing program is continuing to increase, and the university needs additional resources to accommodate prospective students. WCSU will utilize FY 2008 Federal funds (\$130,659) for scholarships for all their nursing programs and ICU simulation equipment. Western also received a State appropriation in FY 2008 for one additional nursing faculty position to meet enrollment demands. With this additional position in place, WCSU projects nursing enrollment increasing by 8 FT students and 7 PT students in FY 2008, and an additional 5 and 2 over the FY 2008 numbers in FY 2009. While that may not seem dramatic, it is important to remember that the number of nursing students per instructor is capped per accreditation requirements.

With additional State funds Western would be able to continue to admit additional students. However, without these funds they would need to restrict admission as in previous years. Western has been forced to turn away an average of 120 qualified nursing candidates due to lack of space. Thus more new nursing students could continue to be admitted into the major and subsequently expected to graduate from Western's nursing BSN program as a result of Federal funding.

At Western there is a shortage of faculty, lab space and equipment. To accommodate the needs of additional students, it is necessary to provide additional resources to address these shortages. Due to the challenges of obtaining clinical placement in hospitals, Western needs human patient simulation labs for student practice and preparation for clinical and alternate clinical experiences. It also needs Simulation Pediatrics and Obstetrics laboratory equipment. Space is available but it needs to be renovated and updated. Federal funds are needed to update these labs and purchase equipment. Once the issue of lab space and equipment are addressed, Western will have the ability to better address its capacity for nursing students. Finally, federal funds would be used for a computer lab for use by current students and also for use by local community healthcare agencies for professional development.

Additional faculty will further address Western's ability to graduate additional nurses with a BSN degree, as it would lay the foundation for expanded admission. Currently there is a shortage of faculty at the university, and increasing the number of students into the nursing major will further stretch current resources. More faculty would allow the university to maintain increased admissions as well as provide better teaching and oversight of the university's lab. Funds would also allow Western to offer 20 scholarships to provide an opportunity for disadvantaged and diverse groups to attend college in a Nursing program.

Central Connecticut State University (CCSU)

CCSU currently offers an RN to BSN program that graduates approximately 20 students a year; moreover, and to complement this existing program and further address workforce issues in Connecticut, a proposal to offer a four-year BSN program has been approved by the CSUS Board of Trustees and it is anticipated that Department of Higher Education approval will occur in the spring of 2008.

It is further anticipated that students will start this new program in the fall 2008 and, in the fall of 2009, CCSU will formally admit 50 students into the first cohort of this new BSN program that will graduate students who can sit for the RN licensing exam. When fully operational, this program will have 150 students admitted and moving toward completion of the BSN.

Providing learning opportunities for 150 students requires excellent teachers and state-of-the-art equipment, including a learning laboratory. With these needs in mind, CCSU has hired a senior nursing educator to provide leadership for the new program and searches for three full-time nursing faculty members are currently underway. Additionally, using \$80,000 of internal resources from CCSU as well as \$34,970 of FY 2008 Federal grant funds, new and needed laboratory equipment (e.g., consumables, medical equipment and state-of-the-art patient simulation stations) are being purchased. CCSU will also utilize internal resources to renovate the nursing learning laboratory.

In anticipation of future needs, and focused on ensuring that CCSU graduates exceptional nurses who can serve and lead, CCSU is requesting \$125,000 in additional funds in FY 2009 for student scholarships, consumable materials and durable equipment for the aforementioned laboratory and finally, a laboratory coordinator to provide clinical supervision to the learning laboratory. The average student who attends the State University System also works part-time and in order to ensure success and retain qualified students, student scholarships would afford students the opportunity to concentrate on a demanding academic schedule that necessitates 8-10 hour clinical days per week as they progress through the program. Financial support for well-qualified students would lessen the multiple demands that many of these students face. In addition, trained staff that are available for student learning, knowledgeable in setting up and working with faculty, and overseeing the management of the lab are key to a successful lab experience. Whether it is a university assistant, or master's prepared nurse, additional federal funding would ensure that the equipment and computer simulation manikins are utilized to their full potential. Finally, funding would be utilized to purchase various supplies are necessary to stock a learning lab.

Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU)

Although Eastern does not offer a Bachelor in Nursing, the university provides science coursework that would help students prepare for their nursing certification. Eastern is currently working on a program to connect Eastern grads to UCONN's Certificate/ Graduate program in Nursing.

We are also emphasizing that Eastern students can complete required courses for most nursing program at Eastern and use those credits towards nursing degrees at other state universities. We need to provide additional courses in chemistry, anatomy, human biology, and laboratory courses to prepare these students. To this end, and to support the existing programs in Public Health, ECSU is requesting \$283,000 for faculty positions in Chemistry and Biology and a laboratory coordinator as well as laboratory equipment and related software.

Please feel free to contact Jill E. Ferraiolo, Associate Vice Chancellor for Government Relations/Communications, should you like any additional information or have any questions regarding this matter.