



February 11, 2022

Dr. Larry Schall, President  
New England Commission of Higher Education  
3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100  
Burlington, MA 01803-4514

Dear Dr. Schall and Commissioners:

As the President of the Central CT Chambers of Commerce, I am keenly aware of the workforce needs of my region and the importance that the community colleges play in providing educated and trained employees in a wide range of positions. Connecticut's 12 community colleges – which serve more than 67,000 credit and non-credit students each year, the majority of whom are people of color and/or from low-income families – are uniquely positioned to prepare large numbers of Connecticut students from all walks of life for in-demand jobs that help businesses to grow and our economy to thrive.

For many years, Connecticut's community college leaders have shared their efforts to improve student outcomes with our chamber members and reviewed the objectives of the restructuring of the 12 community colleges into a single institution – CT State Community College. These actions will put Connecticut's community college system on solid financial footing while improving student outcomes. Streamlining processes and procedures and centralizing back-office functions will allow resources to be reallocated to provide greater student supports at the campus level.

The consolidation of the 12 community colleges into CT State is clearly necessary to ensure the financial viability of the 12 campuses that our member businesses rely on for their future workforce. The consolidation will provide another important benefit for employers; the alignment of the 12 different colleges' curricula into one catalog will create common learning outcomes that apply across all campuses, preventing dissimilar versions of the same program at different campuses and giving businesses confidence that they know what they are getting when they hire a CT State graduate.

On behalf of our member businesses, I am happy to support this consolidation and I look forward to our future collaborations with CT State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Cynthia A. Bombard'.

Cynthia Bombard  
President/CEO

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