STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Ned Lamont
Governor

Susan Bysiewicz
Lt. Governor

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

February 7, 2022

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

Dear Dr. Schall and Members of the New England Commission of Higher Education,

Over the last five years, our agency has partnered with the CSCU system office and its twelve community colleges to establish SNAP Employment and Training programs at each campus. These programs provide an invaluable opportunity to SNAP recipients, allowing them to access high demand programs that result in a livable wage. Assistance includes coverage of tuition and funding for other supports, such as childcare, transportation, books, testing fees, etc. While we have been successful in rolling out programs, the lack of a consistent vision and set of priorities, as well as disparate operating procedures across campuses, has delayed our progress. We support CSCU's substantive change proposal because we believe it presents an opportunity to ensure equity across the state by providing equal opportunity for SNAP recipients. It will also allow us to scale the SNAP Employment and training program more efficiently and explore other partnerships for the benefit of CSCU's students.

As one of the state's primary agencies serving low-income families, we welcome the opportunity to have a streamlined approach to working with what will be one of Connecticut's largest institutions for higher education with 12 campus that offer customized access in every corner of the state.

Sincerely,

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Senior Advisor to the Governor for Health and Human Services
Commissioner, CT Department of Social Services

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