



CITY OF NEW BRITAIN

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THE HONORABLE ERIN E. STEWART

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New England Commission of Higher Education
3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100
Burlington, MA 01803-4514

February 14, 2022

Dear Members of the New England Commission of Higher Education,

I write today in strong support of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) plan to merge their twelve community colleges into a single accredited institution, known as CT State Community College. The merger will not only help to better meet the needs of students and local New Britain businesses, but will help bring 150 jobs to our downtown core.

Our city is already home to Central Connecticut State University and Charter Oak State College, and I am thrilled that we will be welcoming the headquarters of CT State to our downtown. Economic development has been one of my top priorities as Mayor. Hosting CT State's headquarters in downtown New Britain is not only going to bring much needed jobs to our city, but it will increase foot traffic and expand on the redevelopment momentum we have built here in recent years.

New Britain has a rich history of being a manufacturing center in Connecticut, earning us the nickname of the "Hardware City." We are proud to be home to so many manufacturers, from large corporations like Stanley Black and Decker to all the small supply chain machine shops that keep our city running. With manufacturing being an important part of our city's history, it is crucial that the state is able to train and educate the workforce to fill these vital jobs. I'm excited that CT State Community College will be able to help better coordinate our advanced manufacturing centers across the state to meet the needs of our small and large employers.

New Britain sits within a 30-minute drive to four community colleges, which means our students often take classes at multiple colleges through their academic career. The merger of CT State Community College means that our students know that their credits, financial aid, and records will follow them wherever they pursue their degree. Additionally, the ability to access courses (including virtually) at any campus, means more New Britain students will have access to the courses they need, when they need them, helping them graduate on-time.

I strongly support the merger of Connecticut's community colleges for all of these reasons and more, and I urge the Commission to endorse their proposal as well.

Sincerely,

Erin E. Stewart
Mayor of New Britain