

**Testimony from Judy D. Olian, President
Quinnipiac University for the
Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
February 16, 2021**

Quinnipiac University is committed to advancing the health, wellness, and educational needs of our surrounding communities and region. The PILOT for College and Hospital grant program recognizes that we, in addition to hospitals and other non-profits that concentrate in urban centers across the state, serve the public good by providing critical resources and benefits that assist all Connecticut residents, not just those living in municipalities in which the institutions are located.

We strongly support the proposed Sec. 11 of SB 873: **AN ACT MITIGATING ADVERSE TAX CONSEQUENCES RESULTING FROM EMPLOYEES WORKING REMOTELY DURING COVID-19 AND CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF LIENS ON THE PROPERTY OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BENEFICIARIES AND A THREE-TIERED GRANTS PROGRAM IN LIEU OF TAXES PROGRAM**, which seeks to increase PILOT for those municipalities that have a lower net grand list per capita, in order to better aid the municipalities where we educate, work and live.

Throughout the nation, colleges, universities, health care organizations and other non-profit institutions are catalysts for economic development, especially in places like New Haven County and the State of Connecticut. It is estimated that Quinnipiac University generates more than \$1.1 billion dollars annually in economic impact (direct and induced) on the local economy and has initiated the creation of nearly 9,000 jobs. American colleges and universities receive a tax-exempt status because society deems them as necessary, crucial, contributing and serving the public good.

Quinnipiac is a private, coeducational university offering more than 140 programs to approximately 7,000 undergraduate and 3,000 graduate, medical and law students. The student community is demographically and economically diverse, with 93% of students benefiting from various forms of financial aid. In 2020-2021, Quinnipiac offered 58 undergraduate majors and 48 undergraduate minors, along with 35 dual-degree and 46 graduate programs. Nearly all – 97.4% - of our students are either employed or in advanced education programs six months after graduation. For the second consecutive year, the site Zippia.com ranked Quinnipiac as the best college in the nation for employment with an employment rate of 99.1% ten years after graduation. Connecticut is home to nearly 25,000 Quinnipiac alumni.

Quinnipiac is a critical partner in our community. In the 2018-2019 academic year, Quinnipiac:

- Awarded 50% tuition scholarships to twelve Hamden high school students.
- Raised more than \$64,000 for the United Way
- Collected \$332,000 for the Children's Miracle Hospital in a dance marathon.
- Invested \$70,000 in the America Reads literacy program

- Fraternities and sororities raised more than \$94,000 to benefit charitable organizations across the state.
- More than 2,000 students, faculty and staff contributed 6,000 hours of community service at the BIG EVENT, an annual outreach event.
- Continues to serve Veterans' groups.
- Continues to assist the needy with tax preparation through the student Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program.
- Offered physical therapy and legal clinics to community members.
- Collected and distributed 4.8 tons of food for those experiencing food insecurity.

There were more than 200 successful community service projects executed in this one academic year. These efforts continue each year.

Further during the pandemic:

- Medical, health sciences and nursing students are volunteering as vaccine administrators and providing support for Fair Haven, Waterbury, Hartford, Trinity, Quinnipiac Valley Health District (QVHD), Middlesex Hospital, Yale Health System and St. Francis Hospital.
- Students and staff assisting as contact tracers in numerous locations and working with QVHD to assist older adults with vaccine registration.
- The University shared PPE donations of masks, gloves, NIOSH respirator, shoe covers, caps, face shields, N-95 masks and gowns to area hospitals and health centers.
- Last April, students made more than 1,300 cloth masks for healthcare facilities and our clinical partners across the state.
- Our medical students are providing virtual tutoring for youth in the region. They organized a supply drive for Columbus House/New Reach Shelters, served as counselors for the Crisis Text Line, provided live and video weekly activities for Special Olympics CT, staffed a call center for Trinity Health System and served in numerous other capacities. They also continue to deliver groceries to the homebound and elderly.

We strongly urge you to assist our municipalities with equitable funding. It is time to revise PILOT's current calculation of grants in lieu of taxes paid to municipalities and implement a three-tiered grant program. In this way, municipalities without the ability to generate sufficient property tax revenue from their grand list would receive a greater allocation of their statutory reimbursement. Additional state aid is vital as cities and towns have no other form of revenue for growth beyond raising property taxes.

Thank you.