

Written testimony submitted by Adam Bourgoïn to the State of Connecticut Appropriations Committee in advance of the March 4, 2021 public hearing concerning the Governor's proposed FY 2022-2023 Budget for Higher Education Agencies.

Thank you to the committee co-chairs, ranking members, and members for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony to the Appropriations Committee. My name is Adam Bourgoïn, and I am a registered nurse and an assistant professor at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in the department of nursing. I began teaching in the nursing program as a full-time faculty member in August of 2020 after spending just over six years at the bedside. My areas of training include post-operative surgical, cardiology, emergency, and trauma. I have also held positions in leadership and management and have a master's degree in nursing leadership and management and am currently working on obtaining a doctorate in nursing practice with a focus on educational leadership.

My time at the bedside showed me many things, but most importantly I witnessed the resilience of nurses and other healthcare providers as we worked together to treat the sick, injured, and vulnerable residents of Connecticut. The pandemic has highlighted this resilience, but also has shed light on the toll that healthcare takes on those at the bedside. Prior to the pandemic, we were making headway on the nursing shortage, in large part due to the large number of nursing programs at higher education institutions throughout the state. However, the pandemic has brought about a frightening amount of attrition from the front lines. Many nurses are leaving larger hospitals in favor of positions away from the bedside altogether, or in less strenuous positions.

The prospect of a mass exodus from the front lines is dangerous for multiple reasons. To highlight: as the nursing population ages and moves away from the bedside, there will be fewer experienced nurses to teach incoming nurses. That fact compounded with younger nurses leaving due to the strain of the system, and the state could be poised on the brink of disaster.

With that in mind, your support for the Connecticut State Universities has never been more important than it is now. As our country and state continues to deal with a pandemic that has already taken the lives of more than a half a million Americans, decimated businesses, impacted education, and strained health care to the brink of failure, support and full funding for Connecticut public higher education will make the difference between universities that are well equipped to educate and train the students who are the future of our state, and universities that merely go through the motions of issuing certificates and degrees. Please bear in mind that accreditation of vital programs such as nursing depend on well-funded universities to be able to provide top notch education to the future of the profession.

I thank you for your time and consideration, and for hearing the concerns of students, faculty, and the general public. I appreciate your support and the support of the Appropriations Committee for public higher education in Connecticut.