



**Testimony of Goodwin University in Support of the Continued and Increased Funding for the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program Contained in H.B. 6439 – An Act Concerning The State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2023.**

**Appropriations Committee Public Hearing Regarding the Governor’s Proposed FY 2022-2023 Budget for Higher Education Agencies.**

**March 4, 2021**

Goodwin University, a private, non-profit institution of higher educational located in East Hartford, with over 3,500 students (97% CT Residents) coming from 139 Connecticut cities and towns, supports the continued year-over-year funding of the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program contained in the Governor’s Proposed Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget.

In the fall of 2020, the Governor allocated \$6.8 million towards the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program from the [Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund](#). **Goodwin University would ask that the appropriation in the biennium be increased accordingly** so its students, and those of other Connecticut institutions of higher educations, are not faced with a reduction in financial aid this fall.

Many Goodwin students are in a borderline poverty situation. In a typical year, it is not uncommon to have approximately one-third of all Goodwin students, and their families, categorized at the “\$0-0” Expected Family Contribution (EFC) level. This means these families have no assets to help offset the costs of their college education. Additionally, in a typical year, it is also not uncommon that 80-90% of Goodwin students are eligible for some type of financial aid.

Accordingly, the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program is critical to those students’ ability to begin, sustain and complete their college education.

Goodwin University and its students have seen a significant reduction in the previously named Governor’s Scholarship Program, now Roberta Willis Scholarship Program, over the past several years:

As example, in **FY 2013-2014**, Goodwin students received approximately \$1.7M in such funding, which was allocated to some 1,600 students.

In the most recent information available, for **FY2019-2020**, that above noted funding amount had been reduced to \$653,937 reaching only 350 students.

Goodwin University and its students are truly grateful to the Governor, the Appropriations Committee and Connecticut General Assembly for its on-going support of Connecticut’s private college students through the continued funding of the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program.

Goodwin University urges the Appropriations Committee to increase the funding appropriation of the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program contained in the Governor's FY 2022-2023 Biennial Budget.

**Submitted by:**

**Gary Minor**

**Senior Director, University Relations**

**Goodwin University**

**(O) 860-727-6733**

**(C) 860-471-0379**