



Margaret Keane
Chief Executive Officer

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Re: Testimony in support of Senate Bill 885, An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations for General Government
March 26, 2021

Good morning Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Margaret Keane and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Synchrony Financial, and I am also a member of the Governor's Workforce Council (GWC). I am writing in support of S.B. 885, which would codify the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) under the leadership of the Chief Workforce Officer of Connecticut. The OWS has been critical in coordinating workforce initiatives and executing on the Governor's Workforce Council strategic plan.

Synchrony, headquartered in Stamford, supports the GWC and the OWS's goal of ensuring that Connecticut develops the most accessible, equitable, and high-quality workforce in the country. The GWC's strategic plan requires coordination with hundreds of stakeholders to ensure that an array of perspectives inform the different recommendations and implementations. Since the inception of the GWC, the OWS has partnered with different stakeholders to spur collective action and execute on the goals and objectives of the individual initiatives in the plan. By codifying the OWS through S.B. 885, we can ensure that the OWS has the organizational flexibility to coordinate and succeed in implementing these important initiatives.

As a member of the Governor's Workforce Council, I have seen firsthand that the OWS has been effective in executing on the initiatives outlined in the strategic plan. The OWS has actively engaged businesses, educators, and community organizations to build, in real-time, a more agile and coordinated workforce. The OWS is coordinating with businesses and industries to better understand the needs of employers. They are working closely with educational partners to ensure that their curriculum is flexible enough to meet the rapidly changing needs of employers. Also, the OWS is partnering with community organizations to ensure the needs of all residents are reflected in the programs and structures.

Section 11 of S.B. 885, outlines the creation and the codification of the Office of Workforce Strategy under the leadership of the Chief Workforce Officer of Connecticut. I support the work of the OWS and Chief Workforce Officer and believe they have been a great success in coordinating the state's workforce efforts. My team and I are very excited to see the initiatives of the Governor's Workforce Council come to fruition over the next few years and are confident



that the Office of Workforce Strategy will continue to deliver on difficult, but exciting, work ahead.

Best regards,

Margaret Keane
CEO, Synchrony