



**Testimony before
the Commission on Enhancing Agency Outcomes
by Chancellor David G. Carter
Connecticut State University System
*Monday, December 14, 2009***

Good morning, Senator Slossberg, Representative Spallone and members of the Commission. My name is David Carter, Chancellor of the Connecticut State University System (CSUS). I am pleased to be here today to offer comments on the Commission's "Proposed Areas of Focus."

I commend you for your work in this area, examining ways to improve outcomes in government, and the important task you have before you. I will limit my remarks given the constraints of time, but would be happy to address any questions you may have. I certainly welcome the opportunity to continue working with you to further explore the issues highlighted today.

I want to specifically address one of the proposed areas of focus that you are considering – "Cooperative Purchasing Opportunities." We wholeheartedly agree that cooperative and purchasing through a consortium, as well as bulk purchasing, can be a tremendous source of savings. So much so, in fact, that we already do quite a bit.

At CSUS, we continue to maximize savings, efficiencies and economies of scale by entering into Systemwide contracts for commodities and services whenever possible. For example, we use Systemwide contracts for Accounting Services, Student Sickness and Accident Insurance, the Emergency Notification System, Collection Agency Services, Background Check Services, and Executive Search Services. We have negotiated Master Contracts for the universities and the System Office to use on an "as needed" basis for PCs, laptops and servers, Network Application Appliances and Executive Search Services.

In some instances, CSUS has opened its contracts to the other units of public higher education, or other state agencies. For example, CSUS has the Master Agreement for Adobe software products, and each of the other constituent units of public higher education is an affiliate under the contract. In the case of maintenance of Apple hardware, the K through 12 schools use our contract.

Further, the CSUS piggybacks State-wide contracts made available through the Department of Administrative Services and the Department of Information Technology whenever it is feasible and appropriate. It is important to note, however, that because of the statutory authority afforded the constituent units of higher education to conduct their own purchasing, on numerous occasions CSUS has been able to secure better prices for goods and services than those offered through State contracts. In fact, it is our general practice to test the market to be sure that we are getting the best price available before using a State contract.

All four of our universities and the System Office participate in the State's Purchasing Card program. This program has been very beneficial for us in terms of streamlining work- and paper-flow and creating efficiencies. However, this program must be implemented very carefully to ensure that the required controls are in place to prevent misuse. I am proud to point out that there have been no irregularities identified in our purchasing card programs; Central's program in particular is a great example of a well-run P-Card program.

Finally, CSUS participates in consortiums such as the Connecticut Colleges Purchasing Group for certain goods and services. CCPG is a buying consortium of 38 public and private higher education institutions in which representatives of the member schools join together to share ideas and purchasing contracts.

Purchasing through a consortium and bundle purchasing are effective techniques for achieving savings and promoting efficiency in procurement. We take every opportunity to maximize our scarce resources and assist others in doing the same.

There is more I can say, but I know there will be opportunities to do so in the future. We are committed to working with you, and would appreciate being involved as your discussions continue. Thank you very much.