



A Voice For Faculty

Capitol Monitor

A Weekly Report on Activity at the State Capitol

Vol. 5, Issue 4 | May 6, 2015

Republicans, Legislature Issue Budget:

Last week the Connecticut Legislature released their budget proposal, which restored many cuts made in the Governor's budget proposal from February. With the state facing a \$1.3 billion deficit, the Governor proposed a 5 percent cut to funding for the CSCU system. The Appropriations Committee answered back with a 1.8 percent cut instead. The Republican plan would have increased the Governor's proposed cuts by nearly \$2 million and done away with the Board of Regents and its president. The budget process is far from over as now lawmakers and the Governor must hash out a plan to reconcile the two versions of the budget. Click here for a link to [CT Mirror's Budget Tracker](#).

Saving a Campus:

When the Board of Regents announced that it would manage budget restraints by [closing the Meriden campus](#) of Middlesex Community College, [the state Senate reacted](#) by passing a bill April 8 to prevent any campus closures without legislative approval. The bill passed a vote in the House of Representatives and the Senate but was vetoed by Governor Malloy.

SARA Dies:

CSU-AAUP members and staff worked with our lobbyists to testify for and against and made recommendations to many of the Higher Education bills this session. Included was H.B. 6715, an act requiring Connecticut to participate in the state authorization reciprocity agreements (SARA) regarding distance education. This bill would have allowed out-of-state, for-profit universities to operate in Connecticut without being held accountable to the same rigorous standards by which our state's institutions of higher education must abide. HB 6715 died in committee as a result of our lobbying efforts and our members voicing their opposition to the bill.

Legislating Criminal Background Checks:

Substitute Senate Bill 861 would require criminal background checks for any CSU faculty member up for promotion. CSU-AAUP opposes this bill because the Collective Bargaining Agreement already provides for discipline - including termination - of faculty for "adequate cause." Faculty already undergo criminal background checks before being hired. Adding further layers of bureaucracy to a university system that has already seen their budgets slashed to the bone will only add to the burden placed on our institutions. Singling out faculty for this - as opposed to any other state employee - is simply unfair and some might even say discriminatory.

This bill has been passed out of two committees and could be voted on any day on the floor. Please join us in our opposition to SB861. [Contact your legislators](#) today and tell them to vote no to this bill.

How You Can Take Action:

CSU-AAUP encourages faculty to contact their legislators and urge them to support funding for the CSUs. It is essential that we maintain a dialogue with our legislators. They want to hear from you, their constituents. Please contact your legislators. Tell them why funding the CSUs is essential to our state's future. To find your legislator, please [click here](#). If we all join our voices together, they will be heard.

“Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country.” - Franklin D. Roosevelt

What are the hot topics at the Capitol?

From the [Office of Legislative Research](#):

1. Proposed Bills Enacted Into Law.
2. Penalties for Computer Hacking.
3. Affordable Housing Programs in Connecticut.
4. The Castle Doctrine and Stand-Your-Ground Law