

Guide to Testifying at the Legislature or the Board of Regents



Created by CSU-AAUP staff



Welcome

This document is a guide for CSU-AAUP faculty members who wish to testify at the State Legislature or at the Board of Regents.

Each year, CSU-AAUP advocates for bills in the State Legislature that would improve conditions for faculty, students and the larger CSU community. In the past, we have supported bills on student food insecurity, adjunct faculty unemployment access and increases in the state's budget for higher education.

It's important for constituents to talk with the LOB or the BOR and tell their stories, but it can also be a confusing and nerve-wracking process. This guide will help you get past the bureaucratic roadblocks and gain confidence in testifying..

In Solidarity,
Madeline St. Amour
Communications Director, CSU-AAUP

In this document . . .

- Why is it important to testify?
- What is the process?
- Quick tips
- Outlines for written and oral testimony
- Examples of past testimony by members



Why is it important to testify?

Testifying is one of the most important ways to **have a voice** in what happens at the LOB or BOR.

Legislators **rely on citizens** to testify and tell them what's happening on the ground for certain issues. They're not subject matter experts in everything - they get much of their information from the groups and citizens who provide it.

The allotted public comment time at BOR meetings is also **our only chance** for members to directly communicate with board members.

The Process

Keep an eye on [this page of our website](#) to know what CSU-AAUP is supporting or opposing. If you want to testify on a bill or issue but don't know where CSU-AAUP stands, please contact the communications director for guidance.

Do not identify yourself as a CSU-AAUP member or speak on behalf of CSU-AAUP when you don't know where we stand as a group on an issue.

Madeline St. Amour
communications@csuaaup.org
Director of Communications
CSU-AAUP

The LOB

The Connecticut General Assembly posts a Bulletin regularly.

It's long, but you can use **control+F** to search for what you're interested in, either a bill number or "higher ed" to see what the committee is hearing.

The hearings will be posted here with dates, times and registration links. **Sometimes the link won't be up until a day or two beforehand.**

You can also search for information about a specific Bill by clicking "**Quick Bill Search**" at the top of the CGA.ct.gov website. A search function will open up at the bottom.



CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
State Capitol | Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1562

Quick Bill Search

Employment

Search Index | Glossary

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

SITE SEARCH



Representation ▾ Committees ▾ Offices ▾ Commissions ▾ Session Items ▾ Statutes ▾ Bill Info ▾ Associated ▾ State Auditors ▶

The LOB

Each committee has different registration deadlines. It's typically about **24 hours** before the hearing is scheduled to start. **If you don't register, you will NOT be allowed to testify.**

You may submit written testimony if you can't provide oral testimony, or in addition to your oral testimony. **We encourage members to submit written testimony** no matter what so that legislators can review it and so you can include additional sources of data or facts, if applicable.

Written testimony can be submitted to an email listed with the public hearing info. For higher ed, that email is: HEDtestimony@cga.ct.gov

TIME LIMIT FOR ORAL TESTIMONY: 3 minutes

Try to keep your written testimony to about one page, double-spaced.

The BOR

The BOR meetings are listed [at this link](#).

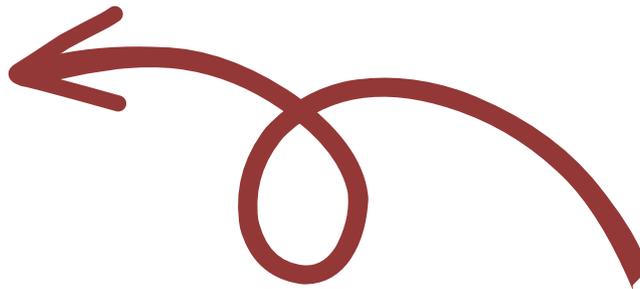
TIME LIMIT FOR TESTIMONY: 3 minutes

You must sign up to testify at the BOR **at least 24 hours in advance** by contacting:

Pam Heleen, Office of Board Affairs

860-723-0013

heleenp@ct.edu



BOR Meetings and Agendas

Preparing Testimony

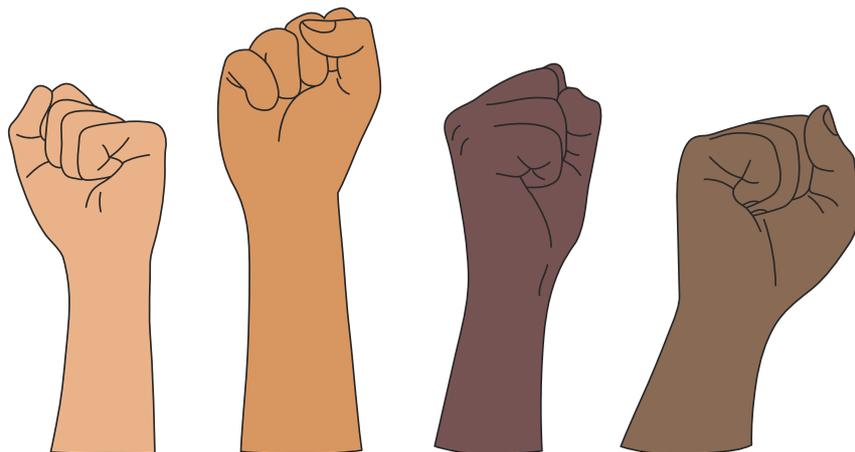
Now, you need to prepare your testimony.

Don't panic.



One of the most important things about testifying is just that you do it. There is value in solidarity, and thus quantity, in this case.

If 20 people show up to the Legislature to support an issue, they're less likely to be ignored by legislators compared to if one person signed up to testify.

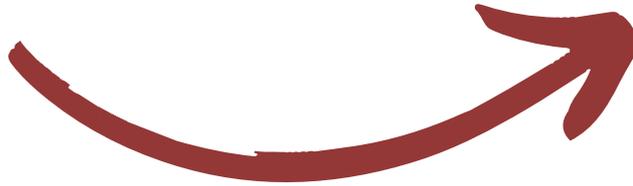


Quick Tips

- Always submit **written testimony** in addition to your oral testimony
- **Clearly state** your name, position, and which bill you are testifying about and which position you are taking on it (arguing for or against)
- If you're testifying for a bill being advocated for or opposed by CSU-AAUP, **state your affiliation** with the union
- It's traditional to open up thanking the board, committee or chairs for hearing your testimony, but **don't waste your time thanking** each legislator or board member individually
- If you are able, **present testimony without actually reading your written statement.** After all, the committee will be able to read your statement later. Your written statement may include supporting documents and references. It may also be somewhat longer and more comprehensive
- Be **prepared for questions** from legislators or board members about your testimony
- Always try to include a personal story in your testimony to have an emotional component. **The more personal your story, or the more you can tell a story about how a bill affects people, the better.**

Quick Tips

You can also find a guide
and more resources at
CGA.ct.gov or by using this
QR code



Outline of Testimony for the LOB

For written testimony, the layout should look like this:

CHAIR OF THE HOUSE OR SENATE COMMITTEE

NAME OF THE HOUSE OR SENATE COMMITTEE

DATE OF HEARING

YOUR NAME

GROUP OR ORG YOU REPRESENT (IF ANY)

CONTACT NUMBER OR ADDRESS

INTRODUCTION

Introduce yourself and your organization, if applicable. Identify which legislation you are testifying on and what your stance is on the bill.

CONTENT

This is where you argue your stance. Use facts and figures, but also include a personal story. How does this affect yourself, the people you serve or people in Connecticut?

CLOSING

Make closing remarks and restate your position.

Outline of Testimony for the BOR

For written testimony, the layout should look like this:

CSCU BOARD OF REGENTS

DATE OF MEETING

YOUR NAME

GROUP OR ORG YOU REPRESENT (IF ANY)

CONTACT NUMBER OR ADDRESS

INTRODUCTION

Introduce yourself and your organization, if applicable. Identify what you are asking for, whether it is to pass or block a proposal or to pressure them to make larger changes.

CONTENT

This is where you argue your stance. Use facts and figures, but also include a personal story. How does this affect yourself, the students you serve or people in Connecticut?

CLOSING

Make closing remarks and restate your position.

Template for Oral Testimony

Good [morning/afternoon] everyone,

Thank you to the [members of the HED committee/members of the Board of Regents] for providing this forum for us to speak today.

My name is [FIRST LAST] and I am a [professor, coach, student, etc.] at [Campus] Connecticut State University.

I am here to speak today on [H.B./S.B. No. XXXX or issue for BOR]. This is an important issue, and I fully [support/oppose] this [legislation/proposal].

As a [title], I know firsthand how this [legislation/proposal] would affect my [institution/students/work]. [INSERT PERSONAL STORY]

That's just one anecdote. There are plenty of data to back it up. [ADD FACTS AND FIGURES. INCLUDE LINKS IN WRITTEN TESTIMONY].

[I/organization (CSU-AAUP)] urge you all to [support/oppose] the [passage of bill No./proposal/issue].

Thank you.

Examples

- In support of a bill addressing student housing insecurity, by Cindy Stretch, SCSU
- On issues regarding COVID, by Cindy Stretch, SCSU