To: John McCarthy, c/o OPM Capitol Office
Fax: 524-7398
Amended Testimony

Devito, Susan

To: susan.hamilton@po.state.ct.us; Sisco, Brenda; jean.henry@po.state.ct.us

Subject: Request for Approval to Testify - John A. McCarthy - HB No. 5741

Request for Approval for Testimony - March 16, 2006 - Labor Committee

1. **HB 5741 - OPPOSE**

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVAILING WAGE THRESHOLDS

We oppose any increase in the prevailing wage threshold. (We received approval to testify in opposition to a similar bill in the Labor Committee last week.)

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AMENDED TESTIMONY ON MARCH 14, 2006

2. **SB 58 - AN ACT CONCERNING PROTECTION OF MINORS IN THE WORKPLACE**

We thank the committee for raising this Governor's bill. Commissioner Cashman is unable to be here today. He is at an out-of-state meeting. I am testifying on his behalf

BACKGROUND:

The bill is a response to violations of Connecticut law by Wal-Mart.

Connecticut has a long history of statutes protecting minors in the workplace. With very limited exceptions minors under the age 18 are prohibited from working in hazardous occupations and are limited in the hours they may work. There have been violations of these Connecticut statutes.

The proposal has a two-fold purpose. It will increase present penalties to make them commensurate to these violations and it will create a strong deterrent to future violations. Some examples of past violations in Connecticut include: Wal-Mart - 3 violations of individuals under the age of 18 performing hazardous work/working with compactors/bailers; 23 individuals working without working papers. Other examples include: Death of a minor performing hazardous work (logging), death of a minor working on a wood chipper, minors performing work on a deli slicer, minors 12 and 13 years old employed by a landscaper and a large number of violations of minors working beyond hours allowed including a large open case under investigation at this time.

The bill replaces a series of old individual penalties for violations of statutes protecting minors. The bill will double the present civil penalty from $300 for each violation to $600 for each violation. In addition violators are subject to fines of between $2000 to $5000 and subject up to 5 years in prison.

Thank you