

Bill #675 and Bill #5650
Extending Hazardous Duty Retirement Benefits to
Correctional Clericals Receiving Unpleasant Duty Pay Stipend
Public Hearing: March 24, 2006

Good afternoon Chairman McDonald, Chairman Lawlor, and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is **Betty Jane Marshall**. I am a Correctional Clerical employee who has worked at four of Connecticut's maximum-security jails and prisons throughout the past seven years. I am speaking as a representative of the Clerical Employees assigned to Connecticut's Correctional facilities.

We are respectfully requesting that you consider extending retroactive Hazardous Duty Retirement Benefits to this small, predominantly female group of Correctional staff members who deserve to be treated equal to our male peers. Presently, everyone who works inside correctional facilities, except Clericals, receives Hazardous Duty Retirement Benefits. Our peers include Correction Officers, Counselors, School Teachers, Maintenance, Food Service, Laundry, and Religious Service Staff. Is it not discriminatory treatment to be working in the same institutions, under the same working conditions, facing the same risks and receiving lesser compensation?

Just like our peers who receive Hazardous Duty Retirement Benefits, our job subjects us to possible assaults, hazardous situations, and even the threat of inmate retaliation on our families or in our personal lives. We are in direct contact and supervise the same inmates. Shouldn't we be treated the same?

Most of our peers are not even aware that Clericals receive lesser benefits. We all work together as a team to ensure the safety and security of the institutions and protect the public. This includes knowing that if an inmate were to hold one of us hostage, our life would be taken before the inmate would be allowed to escape. The same stresses and the threats of injury apply to all Correctional employees.

Clericals, along with Hazardous Duty staff, are required to complete mandatory annual training in First Aid, CPR, HIV, Fire Safety, Stress Management, Suicide Prevention, Diversity, and Aggressive Behavior Management. When an emergency occurs within a facility, everyone is locked in. Clerical Employees, alongside Hazardous Duty Staff, perform their roles and work together as equal members of a team to restore the prison's security before anyone is permitted to leave. So why are just a few denied equal benefits?

By enacting this legislation, you will be correcting a long-standing disparity for a group of professionals who play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and security of Connecticut's Correctional Institutions. Thank you for your support.

Respectfully submitted by: **Betty Jane Marshall**
48 ½ Lawrence Court
Milford, Connecticut 06460
(203) 974-4118