



# CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

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Testimony of Lori J. Pelletier, Secretary-Treasurer,

Connecticut AFL-CIO before the Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 20, 2007

Good Afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and the Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. I am Lori Pelletier and I serve as Secretary-Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO. I am here on behalf of our 900 affiliated local unions from all across this great state who represent 211,000 working men and women, and I appreciate the invitation to address this committee.

We offer our support for the following legislative initiatives:

**Proposed S.B. No. 308 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF CHILD ACTORS.** We should always be concerned when it comes to the exploitation of workers, and even more vigilant when it comes to children. This is common sense legislation.

**Proposed S.B. No. 371 AN ACT CONCERNING WORKPLACE SAFETY. (GL)** We must utilize the safest possible method of manufacturing. When safe alternatives are available, they should be used. Recent news events have shown the possible connection between these harmful chemicals and brain cancer. Taking proactive steps today will limit harmful side effects later.

**Proposed S.B. No. 477 AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS OF THE STATE FOR A JOB FUNNEL PROGRAM IN BRIDGEPORT. (CE)** We are 49<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states in job growth. We must begin solving this problem before it is too late. Job creation needs to be a priority, not an after thought.

**Proposed S.B. No. 601 AN ACT MANDATING EMPLOYERS TO PROVIDE PAID SICK LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES.** Over the past two decades the number of employers who provide paid sick days has diminished by nearly 38%. It's not to say that employees don't get ill, they do and then they are stuck losing time and pay from work.

**Proposed S.B. No. 602 AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYER-SPONSORED MEETINGS.** Tragically employers are using desperate means to undermine employees right to association. This narrowly crafted piece of legislation would serve as a benchmark for employers to adhere to, and would level the playing field between employers and employees.

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The issue of undocumented workers in the workforce is really attributed to wants of employers. We are supportive of legislation that stops the exploitation of workers, and if financially punishing the employer who hires illegally. Therefore we support these next two proposed bills.

**Proposed S.B. No. 931 AN ACT CONCERNING THE HIRING OF UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS BY CONTRACTORS.**

**Proposed H.B. No. 5064 AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT OF ALIENS NOT ENTITLED TO LAWFUL RESIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.**

We support the following proposed bills:

**Proposed H.B. No. 5694 AN ACT CONCERNING HAZARDOUS DUTY ASSIGNMENTS AND THE CALCULATION OF RETIREMENT CREDIT FOR DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION WORKERS.**

**Proposed H.B. No. 5699 AN ACT CONCERNING INCREASED PAY RATES FOR HOME HEALTH AIDES.**

**Proposed H.B. No. 5702 AN ACT CONCERNING SAFE WORKPLACES.**

**Proposed H.B. No. 5703 AN ACT CONCERNING SURVIVING SPOUSES OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT FUND.**

**Proposed H.B. No. 6404 AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF MECHANICAL LOADING OR UNLOADING EQUIPMENT AT CERTAIN SOLID WASTE FACILITIES. (ENV)**

Healthcare is the Connecticut AFL-CIO's top priority for this legislative cycle and we support the following proposed bills:

**Proposed H.B. No. 6333 AN ACT EXPANDING THE STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN. (PH)**

**Proposed H.B. No. 6678 AN ACT INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY OF HEALTH CARE FOR CONNECTICUT WORKERS.**

Finally, we are supportive of these pieces of legislation:

**Proposed H.B. No. 6967 AN ACT EXTENDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE TO PUBLIC SAFETY WORKERS INJURED DURING OFF-DUTY EMERGENCIES.**

**H.B. No. 6989 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING NONCOMPETE AGREEMENTS.**

I want to thank this committee for holding this public hearing and if you have any questions I'd be glad to address them.