

TO: General Assembly Labor and Public Employees Committee
RE: Raised Senate Bill No. 1138
AN ACT REQUIRING SAFETY INSPECTIONS BY STATE
EMPLOYEES OF CERTAIN STATE PROJECTS
DATE: February 15, 2007

Senator Edith Prague, Representative Kevin Ryan, and Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Oscar Gomez. I've been a Systems Developer at the DSS for the past 19 years.

I had the pleasure of meeting with some of you during Gov. Roland's IT Privatization initiative. At that time, you were open and welcomed any information we could bring before you in order to determine how good or just how bad of an idea that was. The latter prevailed and we are now better able to protect the public privacy issues that were a great concern to all.

During that endeavor, CSEA was able to expose the way private contractors used the procurement system to get paid for work that was not delivered, not timely as promised, systems that never worked and with claims of "change orders" could continue to bill the state for shoddy work.

We also brought to your attention some of the gimmicks employed at other states and how those states failed to protect their citizens and government from being bilked for millions of dollars before these companies moved on to the next state.

The best asset we have to protect others and ourselves from the rampant fraud that goes on, are our state employees. We are accountable every day for the work we perform at our respective agencies. We must adhere to standards, rules and regulations imposed by our government and their designees.

Unless we can impose the same type of accountability and consequences on the contractors, we will continue to be exposed to the current abuse, expense and fraud that go on now. This bill is a step towards the type of clean contracting environment we hope to promote. I urge you to vote for this SB 1138.

Thank you for your time. I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Oscar Gomez
CT Dept of Social Services
President, Chapter 33, CSEA/SEIU Local 2001
33 Sylvester St
Springfield, MA 01109
(413) 739-2357