



March 8, 2007

**Statement by Paul Filson, Director of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Connecticut State Council in support of Raised Bill 7032 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE RETENTION OF JOBS IN CONNECTICUT AND THE UNITED STATES and Bills 6678 and 7314 ACTS CONCERNING HEALTH CARE– Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee.**

CONNECTICUT  
STATE COUNCIL

SERVICE EMPLOYEES  
INTERNATIONAL UNION  
AFL-CIO-CLC

Good Morning, Co-Chairs, Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and distinguished members of the Labor Committee - I appreciate the opportunity to be here before you today. My name is Paul Filson and I am Director of SEIU's Connecticut State Council. The State Council represents over 55,000 members including 13,000 active retired members in Connecticut. SEIU is Connecticut's largest union. We are the largest health care union, building service union, and we represent the most state employees. SEIU also represents police officers, municipal workers, bus drivers and community college professors and staff. The State Council coordinates the political activity for SEIU in Connecticut.

**Bill 7032** insures that public dollars are spent in a way that enhances our State. It increases transparency and accountability by requiring State Agencies to disclose where services will be performed and to consider the economic impact to the State when services are subcontracted. Transparency is always good public policy.

If it is necessary to subcontract work why shouldn't the public be confident that its dollars are well spent? Tax dollars paid in wages that remain in Connecticut or the United States have a multiplier effect. Payroll taxes are paid back to the State. Wages are spent at Connecticut businesses which pay taxes also.

Finally, the State of Connecticut must not support the race to the bottom. That race often ends up in China or Guatemala or Bangladesh where workers earn sweatshop wages under horrendous conditions. Businesses operating in Asia or Latin America flout environmental and labor standards exploiting workers and communities where they do business. **Bill 7032** should go even further in my opinion. It should require that businesses that the State subcontracts to pay a living wage and to be in full compliance with all labor and

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environmental laws.

**Bill 6678** requires that the dollars spent on securing health care through insurance plans be spent on actually providing health care. Our current system allows insurance companies to charge exorbitant fees for administration and allows for enormous profits. CEOs of insurance companies and top executives rake in millions of dollars annually in salary and stock options. This money could be better spent on providing health care to the 400,000 uninsured residents of Connecticut. SEIU supports the concept expressed in this bill.

**Bill 7314** creates universal health care in Connecticut. It meets the principles of the Institute of Medicine and it will make Connecticut an extremely attractive place to live, work and do business. In essence **Bill 7314** leverages the purchasing power of the state to create an enormous pool of insured individuals – spreading risk and lowering overall cost to the state and to society as a whole.