



**Administrative and Residual Employees Union
Local 4200, AFT CT, AFT, AFL-CIO**

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Professionals Working So State Government Works

Testimony

GAE

2/25/08

Michael Winkler

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MW', is written over the printed name 'Michael Winkler'.

First Vice-President

Good morning to the Chairs, Senator Slossberg and Representative Caruso, and Committee members. My name is Michael Winkler First Vice-President of A&R, AFT Local 4200. We represent the accountants, planners, tax collectors, lawyers and other professional administrative employees in state service.

I'm here to speak in favor of GAE Raised Bill No. 335, An Act Concerning the Protection of Whistle-Blowers.

As my members handle the State's money, we're in a better position to see fiscal mismanagement than most other state employees. Our members may have more opportunities to blow the whistle than the members of any other bargaining unit in state service. Assuming that we all want to know when fiscal mismanagement occurs, we should protect whistleblowers.

Currently, if one of my members is ordered to pay a bill for which there is no contract, no account, no line-item, and blows the whistle, the presumption that a negative action taken by management against him or her is due to whistle-blowing expires after one year. In other words, if you blew the whistle, and the managers held onto their jobs, after one year they could go after you and you would be unprotected.

I submit to you that if you blew the whistle, waiting a year to get you would be no problem for management.

Last year, my union tried to get a three year presumption written into the law. While not perfect, it would protect our members far better. We are gratified to see this provision in Section One (b)(5) of your Committee's bill.

We appreciate what you are doing for our members.