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CONNECTICUT  
STATE COUNCIL

SERVICE EMPLOYEES  
INTERNATIONAL UNION  
CTW, CLC

Statement by Paul Filson, Director of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Connecticut State Council regarding **Senate Bill 163 AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT.**— before the Human Services Committee.

Good morning, Co-Chairs, Senator Harris, Representative Villano and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee - I appreciate the opportunity to be here before you today. My name is Paul Filson and I am Director of the Service Employees International Union's Connecticut State Council. The State Council represents over 55,000 active members in Connecticut. SEIU is Connecticut's largest union. We represent health care workers, building service workers, state/municipal employees and community college professors and staff.

SEIU supports **Senate Bill 163** and the creation of a refundable earned income tax credit for the State of Connecticut. An EITC would not be our favored method for boosting working families out of poverty. Ideally, all workers would earn a living wage that included health and retirement benefits. However, Connecticut's minimum wage, though higher than the national average, leaves workers unable to pay the rent, put food on the table, clothe themselves and purchase health insurance. Workers earning the minimum wage or even more can forget about putting away any money for savings. Connecticut is one of the most expensive states to live in.

Corporations in Connecticut receive tax credits to encourage research and development. They receive tax credits to encourage the creation of jobs. Why shouldn't low skilled workers also be encouraged to work, rather than receive public assistance? Many conservative economists believe these kinds of tax investments result in positive outcomes and ultimately pay for themselves – meaning that the cost to tax payers is minimal.

Finally, SEIU believes that the Connecticut income tax should be made fairer. Lower income working people pay a much higher proportion of their income in taxes than wealthier tax payers. An EITC would add to the progressivity of our income tax. During difficult times an EITC might even help stimulate Connecticut's economy.

SEIU encourages the members of the Human Services Committee to vote in favor of the creation of an EITC for Connecticut.

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