



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Good Morning Chairperson Prague, Chairman Ryan, Ranking Members Noujaim and Guglielmo and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. I would like to thank the committee for raising House Bill 5248, *An Act Concerning the Legislature's Impact on Employment in the State*.

HB 5248 is a proposal that can help the legislature assess the impact a proposed law may have on jobs and our economy. Including a jobs impact statement on our fiscal notes will help us determine whether a bill will help or hurt the state.

During these difficult times we as a legislature must ensure that everything we do is for the good of the people. The Secretary of State has indicated that a record number of businesses - over 13,000 - closed last year. These closings force companies, large and small, to layoff employees, and lines at the unemployment office grow longer. The state of Connecticut must protect its citizens as best as possible.

Certainly, a large portion of recent job losses are out of our control and are a product of the global recession. However, some of those job losses may have been a direct result of legislation we adopted two or more years ago. The point is that we don't know because we don't require that such information be provided before we vote on bills. We can't afford to just let businesses close and job opportunities dry up without fully vetting the impact legislation may have on jobs, business and our economy.

One of our responsibilities as legislators is to look out for the best interest of the state and its budget. As you know, we do that by requiring fiscal notes on all bills prior to taking a vote as a full assembly. What's missing from the analysis of our proposed laws is some recognition that we also have an obligation to look out for the best interest of our citizens as well - that means ensuring that we protect jobs whenever we can. A job impact statement will give us a clear view of the effects our legislation will have on Connecticut jobs.

In order to cover our current budget deficit and produce a new two-year budget, we are going to have to find new and innovative ways to save money and yet maintain our vital core services. We must take the necessary steps to ensure what we are doing does not make things worse.

Thank you. I am available to answer any questions you might have.