



# CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

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Testimony of Lori Pelletier, Secretary-Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO

Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 26, 2009

Good afternoon Senator Prague and Representative Ryan and the members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, my name is Lori Pelletier and I serve as Secretary-Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO, and on behalf of 900 local union affiliates representing 220,000 union men and women from every city and town in Connecticut, thank you for holding this public hearing.

I am here to testify in support of the following bills:

S.B. No. 363 (COMM) Labor and Public Employees. AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE and H.B. No. 5249 (COMM) Labor and Public Employees. AN ACT CONCERNING TIMELY MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR INJURED WORKERS. A worker who has been unable to work because of their compensable injury is some of the most vulnerable people in our state. Not only have they been physically injured, but their financial stability has also been hurt. These two bills would provide additional security for those who fall under its scope. Injured workers need these protections.

S.B. No. 979 (RAISED) Labor and Public Employees. AN ACT CONCERNING INTEREST PENALTIES ON LATE PAYMENT OF ASSESSMENTS TO THE SECOND INJURY FUND. This fund was established to protect workers from unscrupulous employers. Increasing penalties on employers who are not following the rules to help keep this fund available makes sense which is why we support this bill.

H.B. No. 6192 (RAISED) Labor and Public Employees. AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRESUMPTIONS FOR METHICILLIN-RESISTANT STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION, and H.B. No. 6194 (RAISED) Labor and Public Employees. AN ACT CONCERNING ADDITIONAL WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRESUMPTIONS FOR FIREFIGHTERS, POLICE OFFICERS AND EMERGENCY RESCUE WORKERS.

In today's world airborne and blood borne disease are prevalent in correctional and emergency service work and our dedicated public servants who perform those duties need protection. The worksites these public servants go to every day are exceptionally hazardous. Fire and smoke engulfed buildings, poorly lit alleyways and hostage situations, and over loaded correctional facilities are their "desks". In passing these bills you will acknowledge the hazardous environments these public servants protect us from, and allow workers a level playing field if they get injured on the job.

We oppose H.B. No. 6332 (COMM) Labor and Public Employees. AN ACT CONCERNING HOME HEALTH CARE AIDES AS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS. This bill would further exploit these workers, who often work less than full time. These are some of the lowest wage earners, but provide invaluable service for our families. Passing this legislation would expose them to long-term financial hardship should they be injured on the job.

We applaud the Labor and Public Employees committee

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