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**TESTIMONY
OLE KUSHNER HERMANSON**

**LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 24, 2009**

In Favor of Senate Bill 365 An Act Concerning Captive Audience Meetings

My name is Ole Hermanson I am an organizer. I help workers form their own unions. I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 365, an act concerning captive audience meetings. In my six years at AFT Connecticut I have worked on many organizing campaigns. Most of them have been at non-profit organizations, mostly hospitals. I have never worked a campaign in the last six years where the employer did not use an anti-union campaign that included captive audience meetings. Management uses these meetings to coerce and intimidate workers.

In the organizing drive that is going on right now at Rockville General Hospital Management held a Captive Audience meeting in the Emergency Department. The manager singled out one nurse and said "If Michelle, here, asks you to sign a union card she isn't your friend and if she pressures you, you have the right to say "no" to her and tell me about it." Michelle asked why she was being singled out and the manager said, "Well you went to a union meeting, didn't you?" Michelle has since stopped coming to union meetings or taking calls from organizers and she has told her coworkers that she is afraid that if she does anything to support organizing that she will lose her job.

Captive audience meetings are a powerful tool that management uses to pressure people not to exercise their legal right to make their own decisions about joining a union and they should be stopped.

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