



AFT Connecticut
AFT, AFL-CIO

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Testimony
SHARON M. PALMER

Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 24, 2009

Good afternoon, Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of the Committee. I am Sharon Palmer, President, AFT Connecticut, a diverse 28,000 member union representing professionals in both the public and private sector.

I am here today to remark briefly on several bills and put AFT Connecticut on record regarding our positions.

Bill 362 - Equal Pay for Equal Work - This bill is long overdue. AFT Connecticut fully supports this bill and hopes it will move forward with strong support from this Committee and the General Assembly.

Bill 365 - Captive Audience - AFT Connecticut strongly believes this bill is as important as card check (Employee Free Choice Act) legislation being considered by Congress. The ability of employers to stall an organizing campaign, threaten, brow beat, lie and conduct captive audience meetings has severely hampered the freedom of unions to organize. We have an AFT Connecticut organizer testifying today who will tell you of his experiences in organizing campaigns. Passage of this legislation will make a difference, please support it.

Bill 804 - Municipal Binding Arbitration - We all know Connecticut has non-binding, binding arbitration. While we work under this current process, we believe the union should have the ability to reject an arbitration decision in the same manner as a local legislative body. It is clearly unfair and unbalanced for the parties not to have equal rights. While we have additional concerns this legislation would go along way toward correcting the process. We also believe the same correction should be made to the Teacher Negotiation Act.



Bill 6187 - Paid Sick Leave - AFT Connecticut strongly supports this bill even though we have very few members without paid sick leave. As a civilized, developed nation and state we need to catch up with the rest of the developed nations. America has the most productive workers in the world. People need to be able to take care of themselves and their families. In the big picture we all benefit from that. Please support this bill.

Thank you for your time and the hearing opportunity.

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