



**Testimony of
Mark Waxenberg, Director Government Relations
Connecticut Education Association**

Before the

Appropriations Committee

Governor's Deficit Mitigation Plan

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**Connecticut Education
Association**

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Good afternoon, my name is Mark Waxenberg, Director of Government Relations of the Connecticut Education Association representing approximately 37,000 teachers.

As the famed philosopher Yogi Berra said, "It's like Déjà vu all over again".

The Governor once again is asking for changes to Binding Arbitration. She is asking that you, in effect, repeal the word "Binding" from the law and leave the word "Arbitration". Her suggestion to allow for continuous rejection of arbitrated contracts is what led to the jailing of hundreds of teachers in the 1970's. Spanish philosopher George Santayana stated "those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it". I guess the Governor doesn't take that into consideration. That's unfortunate.

As you know, this law has gone through several legislative investigations to determine its fairness and economic impact on cities and towns. In every case the results have been that Binding Arbitration works for both sides and does not cause abnormally high labor agreements between management and the union.

I could go on and on about the "tired and old" suggestions that the Governor is proposing to play to the more conservative wing within her party, but let me close with simple statistics from this year.

According to our records:

- a) 65 teacher contracts were negotiated this year
- b) **42 teacher contracts, or 65% resulted in a 0% increase for next year**
- c) Four contracts, or 6% went to arbitration and all 4, 100% , resulted in a 0% increase for next year

Facts over political rhetoric should prevail in this debate and the facts today and from yesterday prove Binding Arbitration to be a fair resolution process for contract negotiations.

Thank you.