



Written Testimony of  
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**H.B. 6273 - An Act Concerning the Office of State Ethics**

Government Administration and Elections Committee  
February 7, 2011

Senator Slossberg, Representative Morin and Members of the GAE Committee:

AFT Connecticut is a state federation of more than 80 local unions representing a diverse membership of 28,000 public and private sector workers. Among our member local unions is the Administrative and Residual Employees Union, AFT Local 4200, which represents professional employees at nearly every state agency, including the Office of State Ethics and Citizen's Election Advisory Board.

Section 1 (i) of H.B. 6273 would prohibit employees of the Office of State Ethics and the Citizen's Election Advisory Board (A&R members) from participating in all forms of political activity on behalf of any candidate seeking any public office. While A&R and AFT Connecticut support the intent of the legislation, it is overly broad.

In order to cultivate public trust and avoid the appearance of partiality, it is understandable why these employees should be excluded from state political activity. But since neither the Office of State Ethics nor the Citizen's Election Advisory Board has jurisdiction over federal or municipal elections, we ask you to amend Section 1 (i) to clarify that employees are only prohibited from participating in state elections for constitutional officers and members of the General Assembly. There is no reason to prohibit these dedicated public servants from engaging in political activity at the federal and municipal levels because they do not regulate them in the course of their jobs.

The Committee passed a similar bill last session (S.B. 366) and the JF substitute language included the clarification we are seeking in H.B. 6273. I ask you to include this change if the bill is sent out of Committee. Thank you for your consideration.