



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Representative Kelvin Roldán
Testimony submitted to:

The Connecticut General Assembly
Committee on Government Administration and Elections

March 7, 2011

Co-Chairs Senator Slossberg and Representative Morin, Vice Chairs Sen. Meyer and Rep. Lesser, Ranking Members Senator McLachlan and Rep. Hwang, and members of the Government Administration Elections Committee, for the record, my name is Kelvin Roldán, State Representative for the 4th District in the City of Hartford. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 5878, AN ACT CONCERNING DUE DILIGENCE IN STATE QUASI-PUBLIC CONTRACTING AND JOB RETENTION.

First, let me extend my appreciation to the committee for scheduling a hearing on this issue and giving the members of AFSCME Locals 184, 3713 and 1026 the opportunity to express their concerns before you.

The men and women of these locals have operated the Mid-Connecticut plant, located in my district, for over 25 years (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). It is extremely important to note that over that period of time they have amassed and impeccable safety record. This is an energy plant in which fires are a commonplace due to items that are illegally hidden in rugs and bags. It is not uncommon for a propane tank explosion. And yet, the plant has a strong safety record with no major incidents on site.

These workers now face the possibility of losing their jobs to an out of state company. It is my understanding that their intent is to eliminate the union presence. The management is suggesting that they would save money if the union presence is eliminated. Yet without providing a cost-benefit analysis justification, how are we to know if that is truly the case. House Bill 5878 will force quasi-public entities such as the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA), currently overseeing the Mid-Conn Plant, to exercise the necessary due diligence to determine whether in deed this is the case, and assess the overall benefits of experienced, union workers against the employees and experience of any replacement contractor.

House Bill 5878 would provide workers with a right of first refusal for existing employees faced with the prospect of losing their jobs as a result of privatization. These men and women are not asking for anything other than the ability to compete fairly in this process. I am confident that they are provided with the opportunity to compete, they would continue to provide a quality service keep cost down to the municipal and private ratepayer.

Once again, thank you for your time and consideration.