



CONNECTICUT

TESTIMONY OF NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)

BY

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SUPPORTING

SB-363, AN ACT ALLOWING MINORS TO WORK IN FAMILY BUSINESSES

BEFORE THE

LABOR COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 24, 2011

A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees and membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, I offer the following comments:

NFIB/Connecticut strongly supports SB-363, which seeks to allow minors to work in family businesses provided they have the consent of their parents. Under current Connecticut child-labor law, business owners can be in violation for simply having their children help out at a family business. As in the case of many family businesses, passing the business down to future generations is a tradition that would be hampered without passage of this bill. Prohibiting family members from contributing to the business based on age limits their ability to learn the business and share in lifelong lessons that being a part of a family business provides. Parents should have the right to ultimately decide on the level of involvement of their family members.

Even federal legislation outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) addresses these concerns by providing such exemptions. Under FLSA guidelines, youth younger than 16 years of age working in nonagricultural employment in a business solely owned by their parents may work any time of day and for any number of hours. Many other states have made exemptions that allow family members to perform certain tasks without encroaching on labor guidelines. Without passage of this bill, Connecticut is a state that wishes to undermine the traditions on which family businesses are built.

NFIB/Connecticut feels that SB-363 is a positive step and the right approach to take to help address the concerns raised by family run businesses.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment, and NFIB/Connecticut urges passage of the bill.

National Federation of Independent Business — CONNECTICUT

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