



CONNECTICUT BUSINESS & INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

**Testimony of Kia F. Murrell
Assistant Counsel, CBIA
Before the Committee on Labor and Public Employees
Hartford, CT
February 10, 2011**

**S.B. 798 AA Requiring Double Damages be Awarded
in Civil Actions to Collect Wages**

Good Afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and other members of the Committee. My name is Kia Murrell and I am Assistant Counsel at the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA representing more than 10,000 companies throughout the state of Connecticut, but most of our members are small businesses of 50 or fewer employees.

Generally CBIA does not support legislation that increases labor costs and the cost of doing business in the state; creates new administrative burdens for employers; or restricts employers' flexibility in managing their personnel and workplace claims.

In requiring employers to pay double the amount of wages or damages awarded an employee or labor organization in an action to recover unpaid wages, S.B. 798 is an unnecessary and costly proposal. Given that many Connecticut employers are struggling to survive and compete in today's tough economy, the last thing they need is to be unduly penalized in this way. Current law allows the final arbiter of actions to recover unpaid wages to exercise discretion before imposing penalties. That discretion is a hallmark of the judicial and due process systems in this state which should not be disturbed.

For these reasons, we urge the Committee to reject S.B. 798.