



CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

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Testimony of Lori Pelletier

Secretary-Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO

Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee

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Senator Prague and Representative Zalaski and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, I am Lori Pelletier and I serve as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO, and I'm here to testify on behalf of the 900 affiliated local unions who represent 220,000 working women and men from every city and town in our great state.

I am here to testify in support of the following bills:

S.B. No. 913 (RAISED) AN ACT MANDATING EMPLOYERS PROVIDE PAID SICK LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES.

We, at the Connecticut AFL-CIO strongly believe workers need and deserve to be able to take a paid day off in the event of being sick. It is a fundamental right of a fair and just society and is good business practice. We also believe paid sick days should come from a worker's collective bargaining agreement and that all workers should have such an agreement that provides them fundamental quality of life benefits. Unfortunately, in America today, the deck is so stacked against worker's trying to join a union that we find ourselves coming to the legislature seeking enactment of a law to provide these benefits. We look forward to the day when all Connecticut workers have the right to form a union and when benefits such as this will not have to be legislated but instead will be negotiated as part of a collective bargaining agreement

S.B. No. 987 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING COMMUNITY WORKFORCE AGREEMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AT THE CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM.

Anytime the State invests money in improvements to our infrastructure whether that infrastructure is road, bridges or buildings we must insist that the money spent is done so with the utmost integrity. Community Workforce agreements (CWA) are insurance on such investment. CWA's facilitate the smooth completion of a project by allowing stakeholders to agree to ground rules and synchronize expectations before the project starts. Wages, benefits, schedules and work rules are standardized up front, and parties agree to prevent work stoppages and submit to speedy dispute-resolution procedures. They also focus on creating a positive community impact, with targeted hiring, training and outreach programs. CWA's are the smart choice for state dollar investments.

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H.B. No. 6428 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND EMPLOYERS THAT HAVE TRANSFERRED JOBS OUT OF THE STATE. Why should employers who move work out of Connecticut get a free ride? A number of States including Alabama have inserted these types of "clawbacks" in their economic development plans. Clawbacks provide taxpayers a way of making sure their investment in development subsidies pays off in the form of real public benefits, and allow governments to recoup their money if it does not.

The concept of a clawback may seem like common sense. However, with the way many subsidy deals are currently structured, companies often face no penalties if they fail to deliver on promised jobs or investment. A company's plan to create public benefits may be regarded by both corporate executives and public officials as more of a goal than an enforceable commitment. Governments often take a "good faith" approach, assuming the company has done and will continue to do its best, and letting it off the hook if it falls short. This legislation is smart for Connecticut taxpayers and workers. When a company makes an agreement with the State both parties should live up to it, period.

We appreciate the Committee holding this public hearing.