



CONNECTICUT

**TESTIMONY OF
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)
BY
ANDY MARKOWSKI, CONNECTICUT STATE DIRECTOR
SUPPORTING
SB-990, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVAILING RATE OF WAGES
BEFORE THE
LABOR COMMITTEE
MARCH 10, 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-990, which seeks to provide more opportunities for small contractors to bid on public works projects and provides much-needed local property tax relief by doubling the current thresholds for prevailing wage projects. The current prevailing wage statute is in need of reform as it is an antiquated law that serves only to increase the cost of state and municipal public building projects by as much as 20 percent. For example, an electrician who might be earning about \$19 an hour in a privately financed construction job earns as much as \$30 an hour for the same duties at a publicly funded construction site. Municipalities often complain that they can never be assured of hiring the lowest qualified bidder on a project because the law gives a competitive advantage to large unionized contractors at the expense of small and minority contractors. Increasing the current thresholds is long overdue as there has not been an increase in the thresholds since 1991, all the while labor and materials costs have dramatically escalated.

NFIB/Connecticut feels that SB-990 is a positive step and a fair approach to take to help address the concerns raised by small businesses, contractors and taxpayers alike.

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