



January 28, 2011

To: Members of the Legislature's Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re: HB-5460 - An Act Concerning Captive Audience Meetings

I am writing to urge the rejection of the above referenced Act based on the fact that it is misguided, intrusive and will seriously harm the healthy culture of cooperation that our firm has worked hard to create between management and employees.

If I understand the language of this Act correctly the following activities would no longer be permissible:

Immediately following the earthquake in Haiti last year, during a monthly safety meeting an employee initiated a discussion on ways to raise money for the earthquake victims. The employees decided to donate the incentive money they had earned for adhering to safe work practices, contributed their own money and the company decided to match the total raised. \$1800 was sent to the Red Cross. With the passage of this Act, we would be forbidden to even discuss such a noble activity initiated by our workers, because it would be regarded as a "charitable campaign".

It appears that another action that will be forbidden will be the collection of food for local food banks. A common and worth practice.

We support a company softball team, this too seems to be a taboo discussion topic based on the language of this act regarding community activities, since the softball leagues are organized by the local recreation board.

Working together with employees on events and projects such as those listed above are important to the morale of our employees and to creating a culture of high retention.

Employers need to be allowed to encourage a free exchange of ideas, regardless of the topic. For example, when meeting with employees regarding employee benefits we must be free to explain how and why changes that affect them directly come about, regardless of whether that reflects positively or negatively on the behavior of our State's legislature.

This Act appears to be an attempt to keep employees from really understanding how legislation affects the operation of businesses in Connecticut. Interestingly, it seems to

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