



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

February 24, 2011

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 on the following bills:

S.B. No. 363 (COMM) AN ACT ALLOWING MINORS TO WORK IN FAMILY BUSINESSES.

We oppose this legislation. Child labor should not be used nor should it be condoned by the state regardless of who the employer is.

S.B. No. 949 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING PENSION OFFSETS UNDER THE WORKER'S COMPENSATION ACT.

We support this. Both pensions and workers compensation are safety nets for families, this change is long overdue. An injured worker should not be penalized because they have earned a pension or vice versa.

S.B. No. 986 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EMPLOYER'S NOTICE TO DISPUTE CERTAIN CARE DEEMED REASONABLE FOR AN EMPLOYEE UNDER THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT.

We support this legislation. The Workers compensation system should not be an additional burden to an injured worker. If the employer decides he/she doesn't want a certain treatment even though the treatment has been deemed medically necessary there should be a venue for the injured worker to respond.

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H.B. No. 6406 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND EMPLOYEE RIGHTS.

We support this legislation. Employers are going around the intent of collective bargaining agreements when they discipline workers for exercising their rights under the agreement. Retaliation through harassment and discipline have no place on the job, and employers need to be held accountable.

H.B. No. 6407 (RAISED) AN ACT ALLOWING EMPLOYERS TO PAY WAGES USING PAYROLL CARDS.

We oppose this legislation. There are a number of problems with this bill as proposed. Fees, availability of funds, lines of credit are just some of the concerns. If businesses want to be able to utilize this 21st Century form of payment to save money then workers need some assurance that it won't cost them.

H.B. No. 6408 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT.

We support this legislation. PTSD is a harsh reality of our current world. Workers who experience PTSD as a result of work are no different than workers who have torn ACL's as a result of work, except that the injury is to the whole body inside and out. Workers may not be dying of black lung in the numbers they were, but events which cause PTSD are on the rise and workers should be compensated for those injuries.

We appreciate the Committee holding this public hearing.