



Public Hearing Testimony of
Glenn Marshall, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Commerce Committee
February 21, 2012

Good Morning Senator LeBeau, Representative Berger, Senator Frantz, Representative Camillo and members of the Commerce Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with testimony regarding **Senate Bill #1, AAC Connecticut Jobs and the Economy**. My name is Glenn Marshall and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

I am here to speak in strong support of this bill and I wish to commend Senators Williams and Looney for introducing such valuable legislation. My agency is implementing the current Subsidized Training and Employment Program (STEP UP) authorized through Oct. Spec. Sess. Public Act #1, An Act Promoting Economic Growth and Job Creation in the State. For months, my staff has been marketing this program to employers and the employers are now beginning the process of hiring unemployed individuals under these programs. STEP UP currently enables employers with not more than 50 employees to participate in the wage subsidy or grant programs. Senate Bill #1 expands the number of employers who are eligible to participate in the STEP UP program to employers with not more than 100 employees. This expansion enables additional employers to take advantage of the wage subsidy and grant programs, thus putting more unemployed people back to work.

I am very pleased to support the special wage subsidy, outlined in the proposed bill, dedicated solely to employers who hire unemployed Armed Forces members. My agency is always ready to assist Connecticut's veterans in any way we can. The Department of Labor has a long history of assisting veterans. Specifically, my agency has an active Office for Veterans Workforce Development that assists veterans with their employment and training needs. The unemployment rate in Connecticut for these returning veterans is almost double the state unemployment rate. To address this situation, this bill proposes that a Connecticut-based business, that hires an unemployed veteran who has returned from Iraq or Afghanistan, is eligible to receive a wage subsidy for the first 6 months of the veteran's employment. My Office for Veterans Workforce Development is in a unique position to be instrumental in the implementation of this section of the proposed bill. That office is in constant contact with returning veterans and provides much support. This program will be another avenue for the Office of Veterans Workforce Development to assist veterans. I believe we owe our veterans a chance to obtain meaningful employment.

There is also a provision in the proposed bill that protects unemployed individuals from discrimination due to their unemployed status. There have been reports nationwide

and in Connecticut of such discrimination. Therefore, I am here in support of that provision as well.

There are two other proposed bills of which I am here in support. **Senate Bill #77, AAC an Unemployed Armed Forces Members Subsidized Training and Employment Program** and **Senate Bill #79, AAC Unemployed Individuals and Discriminatory Hiring Practices**. These bills mirror the provisions in Senate Bill #1, I mentioned earlier, and I am in full support of these bills.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. I am available to answer any questions you might have.