

State Vocational Federation of Teachers

P.O. Box 290
Rocky Hill, CT 06067-0290

Ph: (860) 721-0317
1-800-378-8020
Fx: (860) 721-0323
Web Site: www.svft.org

Testimony of Valerie Stewart, Aero Tech
Aviation Maintenance Instructor

S.B. No. 340 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE BY STATE EMPLOYEES OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM STUDENTS

Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 9, 2012

My name is Valerie Stewart, and I am an aviation maintenance instructor at CT Aero Tech in Hartford. As a recent employee of the Connecticut Technical School System, I have been amazed at the high level of technical education our system provides. As a homeowner, I would love to give our students in carpentry, masonry, electrical, and hvac opportunities to do some of the renovations and projects I have long wanted to have done. These projects would be educationally valuable to our students. They would be a demonstration of my commitment to technical education, and specifically the CTHSS. As importantly, the money I spent would go directly back into the schools, so students could get the supplies and materials they need. As a trade instructor, I know how spare our budgets are. I would be happy to have the money I spend go to good use.

Unfortunately, under the current rules I could not have any of this work done. The restriction on State employees being prohibited to spend more than \$100 in the schools means I cannot have any significant work done by the students. I think my situation is fairly typical. Last year I worked for Pratt and Whitney. I could have students work on my home, but I didn't know the level of expertise the students have, or the type of jobs they can do. When I became a State employee with the CTHSS, I wanted them to work for me, but no longer could. This problem is easily solved. Senate Bill 340 eliminates this restriction. It exempts contracts with the CTHSS from the \$100 limit, and allows me, and you, to have our cars fixed, work done on our homes, and to take advantage of many of the other services our students provide. It allows State employees to provide educational and financial support to the only State high school system.

In my short time in the system, I have become assured that there are sufficient policies and oversight to ensure that production jobs are appropriately chosen and funded. The current law does not prevent abuse, it impedes education. I want to support technical education for our students by providing them production opportunities. I ask you to support technical education by voting for Senate Bill 340.

Thank you.