



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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Testimony

House Bill 5222

An Act Facilitating the Reemployment of Public School Teachers in Public Institutions of Higher Education

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

March 13, 2012

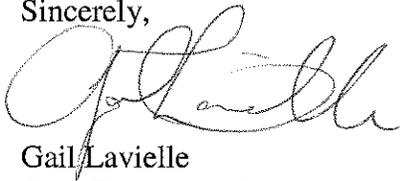
Good afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Willis, Senator Boucher, Representative LeGeyt, and distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on House Bill 5222, An Act Facilitating the Reemployment of Public School Teachers in Public Institutions of Higher Education.

In early discussions of this bill with committee leadership, we explored ways to avoid having former teachers collect a full, taxpayer-funded salary and a taxpayer-funded pension at the same time. As it now reads, the bill allows them to do that. In our early discussions, however, we did raise the question of whether requiring them to suspend their pensions in order to take a full salary would be economically attractive enough for them to accept a position under those conditions. I recognize that the answer might be no, and that would explain the language of the bill that is now before the Committee.

Of course, this bill is based on the premise that the expertise of experienced professional teachers is an important ingredient of strong teacher preparation programs. The question then becomes whether the difficulties teacher preparation programs have in gaining access to highly experienced professionals are great enough to warrant allowing the compensation scenario the bill describes. My purpose here is just to flag that question and to urge the Committee to weigh it thoroughly in its deliberations. Limiting the timeframe for such employment might be one possibility to consider.

In any case, I believe it is important to be mindful both of improving the quality of teacher preparation programs and of our responsibilities to taxpayers. I believe your guidance on this specific matter will be very welcome to the other members of the General Assembly if the bill moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. Lavielle".

Gail Lavielle
State Representative