

Memo

To: Labor and Public Employees Committee
From: Robert J. Brothers, Jr., Executive Director
Date: February 21, 2012
Re: **SB 5199, AN ACT CONCERNING DISCRIMINATORY HIRING PRACTICES
AND UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS**

The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities opposes discrimination in all its forms.

Particularly in these days of high unemployment and low job creation potential employers can be exceptionally choosy and may allow a person's unemployment status as a reflection of the person or their ability to do the work expected. This is wrong and should not happen.

We do, however, need to realize that adding the unemployed to the classes protected under state law is problematic on several levels.

How the Commission could investigate whether a prejudice against the unemployed existed with a company or employee of a company is difficult to grasp given the high number of unemployed applicants for jobs. While it is possible to substantiate a race or age bias in a company, how such could be determined for the unemployed is hard to imagine.

With 154,500 Connecticut residents presently unemployed if only 1% of them were to file a complaint with the Commission it would nearly double our caseload.

While the Commission is with the Labor and Public Employees Committee in spirit, it must oppose this bill on fiscal grounds.