



AFT Connecticut
AFL-CIO

Healthcare
Higher Education
Public Employees
PSRP
Teachers

Testimony
Labor and Public Employees Committee

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Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and members of the Committee. I am Sharon Palmer, President, AFT Connecticut, a diverse 28,000 member AFL-CIO union.

We wish to "weigh in" briefly on several bills before you today:

HB5312 - We urge you to support this bill. It implements parts of the recent SEBAC agreement.

HB5403 - We oppose this bill. State employee collective bargaining agreements often include negotiated provisions for union release time for officers and designated members to perform the work of the union. Most of this time is used during the workday to resolve labor/management issues. Some of this time is used to lobby regarding labor related issues. It is an appropriate use of release time. Please reject this bill.

SB352 and HB5433 - We support the right of these employees to collectively bargain. These two bills determine the process by which this may occur. It does not "force" anyone to join a union. Opting for unionization is done by a

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democratic process and determined by the potential members of the bargaining unit.

You will no doubt hear some very charged emotional testimony today. We ask you to act positively on these two bills. We believe they will lead to better services and higher quality care.

Thank you for providing this opportunity.