

## H.B. 6530 Testimony regarding Retired Teachers' Health Care

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee.

It is with profound disappointment that I appear before you this evening of February 21, 2013 regarding the governor's proposal to withhold the state's contribution to the cost of healthcare for Connecticut's retired teachers. While this would save the state about \$70M over the next two years, it would put the decimation of the TRB health care fund on steroids. This isn't allowed in sports and it should not be allowed in state government.

The reason it would be so devastating is that the governor proposes that our fund pay the state's share. The fund is composed of contributions by teachers and whatever the fund can accumulate through careful management. The state does NOT pay into this fund. I am flabbergasted at the duplicity in this proposal; benefits would stay the same so most active and retired teachers would not even be aware that their health care fund was being siphoned off through this proposal.

Last year, the governor and his team reduced their contribution to our health care. With the legislature's blessing, part of that deal included counting the federal reimbursement for our drug plan as part of the state's contribution. This move cut the state's contribution by about \$10M per year in perpetuity or until that legislation is reversed. I do not understand why they keep coming after the retired teachers to balance the state budget. We already pay significantly toward our healthcare in premiums and other out of pocket expenses. In fact, many retirees still work at other jobs and tutor just to pay their insurance costs.

Poet Robert Frost chose "the path less taken" (I think Governor Malloy takes pride in thinking he also does), but Frost also had "promises to keep". So does the state of Connecticut.

We kept our end of the deal by working diligently to educate Connecticut's children. Now it is the state's turn to honor its commitment. Please do not accept the governor's proposal to NOT fund the retired teachers' health fund.

Thank you.

June Pinkin  
Hartford Federation of Teachers Retiree Chapter President