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Healthcare
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Testimony of
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Children's Committee
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**SB 760 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS BY
TEACHERS AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Good afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Children's Committee. My name is Steve McKeever and I am the First Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of union of nearly 29,000 public and private sector employees including state employees, nurses, healthcare workers, teachers and other school personnel. Prior to my election as First Vice President, I was a high school teacher for 17 years in the Middletown public school system. I am here today to testify in favor of SB 760.

Though infrequent, there are times when a child must be restrained in school. Teachers, paraprofessionals and other school personnel typically receive some kind of training on the appropriate methods to restrain a child, but that does not mean that they are always comfortable performing such a task or feel that restraint is an appropriate action during any given circumstance.

There are also very serious physical concerns that some teachers have when it comes to restraining. When children need to be restrained it is because they are physically out of control. If students are bigger than the teacher, they could potentially harm the physical wellbeing of the teacher. In addition, there could be a number of physical conditions that would make a teacher reluctant to restrain a student. For example, a pregnant teacher, a teacher recovering from surgery, a teacher recuperating from an injury or a teacher suffering from chronic conditions or illnesses, may be reluctant to restrain a student.

SB 760 would allow teachers and other personnel to refuse to restrain a child without fear of incurring disciplinary action. Teachers work hard to develop trusting relationships with their students. They need the freedom to make the right decisions at the right time so that students can learn. SB 760 would provide them the protection to make the most appropriate decisions for their students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I urge you to support SB 760 and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

