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January 31, 2013

Connecticut General Assembly
Labor and Public Employees Committee
Room 3500, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: H.B. 5756, "The Good Jobs Bill"

Senator Osten, Representative Tercyak, and Members of the Labor and Public
Employees Committee:

My name is Maria Rosa, and I work as a building cleaner at UTC's East River Drive
office building in East Hartford. I'm employed by ABM Janitorial Services, a
janitorial company, where I have worked for three years.

I am lucky that I work for a company that pays decent wages with a union contract.
That is why I came here today to request that you pass House Bill 5756 to ensure
that we create decent jobs in this state.

I will tell you my story. I moved here from the Bronx looking for a better life for my
family almost seven years ago. Before having a union contract, I used to make \$6.25
an hour, working six hours a day and without health insurance, paid vacation, sick
days, or any retirement for my future. I worked hard but always struggled to make
ends meet.

When I got the job with a union contract, things improved dramatically. I began to
have wage increases, health insurance that allowed my children to visit the doctor
when needed, without having to worry that we couldn't pay for it.

With the union I began to enjoy the benefits that have allowed me to make a decent
living. Now I am earning a decent wage, and I am able to help support my children.

But today, there are still too many workers who are working for a pittance. How
can a person support a family on eight or nine dollars an hour?

These people need to be treated with respect and dignity. We need to start putting
in a system where working people are not disrespected and exploited. Here in
Connecticut we have the opportunity to help by passing House Bill 5756 to ensure
that no irresponsible companies uses tax dollars to create poverty-level jobs.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Maria Rosa
Steward, Local 32BJ, SEIU
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Kurt Westby, District Director

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