



CONNECTICUT

**TESTIMONY OF
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)
BY
ANDY MARKOWSKI, CONNECTICUT STATE DIRECTOR
REGARDING
HB-6554, AAC UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION
BEFORE THE
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
MARCH 5, 2013**

A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees and membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to "Main Street" small businesses to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, I offer the following comments:

HB-6554, which would require the state Department of Labor to study the unemployment compensation system in the state, has the potential to be a positive piece of legislation if the study contemplated in the bill as currently drafted would address issues in the unemployment compensation system from an employers' perspective. As such, NFIB would hope that such a study includes an examination of the administration and levels of benefits provided in the state. This common-sense study could help pave the way for a healthy discussion of how and when benefits can be adjusted. It must be noted, that Connecticut's small businesses have been straining under high unemployment taxes for some time now and have also suffered from recent surcharges. In order to ease this burden on our state's job creators, NFIB/Connecticut recommends that significant changes need to be made to the eligibility and administration of the state's unemployment benefits system in order to maintain long-term solvency and to ensure the fiscal health of our state's employers. This could include additional efforts to target waste and fraud in the system and also to tighten up the work-search requirements and address the suitability of such for those receiving benefits. NFIB/Connecticut would be happy to work with the Department, the Administration, and members of the Labor Committee in such an endeavor.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.