



Advocating for teachers
and public education

**Connecticut Education
Association**

Governance

Sheila Cohen, President
Jeff Leake, Vice President
Pat Jordan, Secretary
Thomas Nicholas, Treasurer
Kathy Flaherty, NEA Director
Gary Peluchette, NEA Director

Executive Office

Mark Waxenberg
Executive Director

Affiliate Services & Member

Training

Sue Fulleton, Director
Capitol Place, Suite 500
21 Oak Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860-525-5641 800-842-4316
Fax 860-725-6307

An affiliate of the
National Education Association

**TESTIMONY OF ROBYN KAPLAN-CHO, RETIREMENT SPECIALIST,
THE CONNECTICUT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (CEA)
CONCERNING RAISED BILLS RELATED TO
THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

S.B. 341

H.B. 5396

H.B. 5397

S.B. 342

**BEFORE THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 7, 2014**

Good morning Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Robyn Kaplan-Cho, and I have worked as the Retirement Specialist for the CEA for over 19 years.

I would like to express CEA's support for the bills requested by the State Teachers' Retirement Board (STRB), all of which will allow the STRB greater ease of administration related to survivor benefits and unclaimed contributions. S.B. 341 is particularly necessary because it will remove the cap that was placed on the professional fees that can be paid to the STRB's health care consultant. As you know, the retired teachers' health insurance fund is one that requires constant supervision and analysis. The cap imposed in 2010 is a flat dollar amount of \$150,000 and does not allow for increases in fees and services or unanticipated but necessary work by the consultant which are to be expected down the road.

CEA strongly supports passage of Raised Bill No. 342 which repeals language passed in 2012 allowing the State to offset Retiree Drug Subsidy (RDS) reimbursement funds the STRB receives from the federal government when determining its own appropriation to the retiree health fund. By claiming these RDS funds as its own, in addition to reducing its statutorily required contribution, the State is essentially creating a double hit to the health fund. The loss of these millions of dollars of revenue is impeding the long-term solvency of the retired teachers' health insurance fund. We ask that you repeal that provision (C.G.S. Section 10-183t(a)) and discontinue the State's offset of federal RDS funds.

In conclusion, CEA respectfully requests that this Committee act favorably upon Senate bills 341 and 342, and House bills 5396 and 5397.

Thank you for your time and consideration.