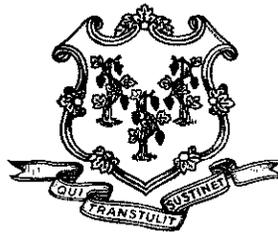


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Good afternoon Sen. Cassano, Rep. Willis, and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. I am here to express my support for SB 401 AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY STANDARDS OF CONTRACTORS PERFORMING WORK AT SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY.

Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 46a-68d requires every contractor on a state public works project to have an affirmative action plan approved by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. However, it is my understanding that the goals are not particularly demanding and that there is not sufficient on-site monitoring. The City of New Haven has more demanding workforce diversity standards for contractors who hold contracts with the City than the state does for its contractors. Specifically, contractors must comply with standards for each class of work listed in the contract that require that 25% of the individuals be from a minority group and 6.9% of the individuals be female. The City, through the New Haven Commission on Equal Opportunity, has enforcement mechanisms and staff trained in this area. A transition toward the New Haven workforce standards would be beneficial for all state contracts; a pilot project at Southern Connecticut State University is an excellent place to begin. This issue is particularly important for state contracts in urban centers; the diversity of the contractors' workforces should attempt to mirror the diversity of the city's residents. It was evident during the Gateway construction project in New Haven that the actual workforce diversity was minimal. Contractors who receive state contracts should be held accountable to provide equal employment opportunity in their workforces. It is a standard that must be upheld. Thank you for raising this important legislation.