



**Public Hearing Testimony of  
Sharon Palmer, Commissioner  
Department of Labor  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
February 18, 2014**

Good Afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Tercyak, Senator Markley and Representative Smith and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with testimony regarding **House Bill No. 5054: AAC Unemployed Job Seekers**. My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Labor Commissioner.

During the time that I have served as the Labor Commissioner, I have spoken to several unemployed job seekers who have not only shared their overall frustrations, but have also shared their experiences with prospective employers as they look for work. One of the unfortunate hurdles that they face stem from the fact that they have been unemployed for an extended period of time. They feel that the fact that they have been unemployed for a long time is hurting them in the job market and that some prospective employers might even be disqualifying them from the job.

For the first time, H.B. # 5054 tackles this problem head-on by prohibiting an employer from advertising or announcing for any job opening that the unemployed need not apply or that an unemployed person will be disqualified for job consideration. While H.B. # 5054 does not require employers to hire prospective unemployed job seekers over other job applicants, it does offer Connecticut residents with a level of security knowing that their employment status did not disqualify them for a job.

I don't believe that this type of activity belongs in employment practice, advertisement or in any consideration for hiring. I commend Governor Malloy for introducing this proposal and urge the Labor Committee's support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today and I am available to answer any questions.