



State of Connecticut  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE CAPITOL  
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ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE  
INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

**TESTIMONY OF REPRESENTATIVE LESSER IN SUPPORT OF HB 5256  
AND REQUESTING REVISIONS TO SB 221**

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

1) I wish to testify in strong support of **HB 5256 AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMPENSATION OF WORKERS ON FAMILY HOLIDAYS.**

This legislation will allow workers at retail establishments to earn overtime when forced to work on family holidays.

Thanksgiving is the most American of holidays — with the obvious exceptions of health professions, first responders and public safety workers, families have been given that day off from their jobs to give thanks for the blessings that this country affords and pause to spend time with their families.

The day after Thanksgiving, Black Friday, traditionally marks the start of the holiday shopping season.

In 1998, however, the nation's largest retailer, WalMart, decided to start Black Friday one day early. Since then every year more retailers have followed suit. To add insult to injury, many of these retailers limit hours in the run up to this holiday to deprive workers of the right to even earn overtime.

This legislation will remedy that problem and help protect real Connecticut family values.

2) Regarding **SB 221**, while I have no position on the proposed language before you concerning mortgage professionals, I would urge you to strike subsection (4)E of the underlying statute referenced in the bill and part of subsection 4(F), namely "the employer's nonfinancial assets valued at two thousand five dollars or more, including, but not limited to," but maintaining the existing exemptions for museum and library collections and prescription drugs.

Based on conversations with the Department of Labor, I am concerned that those sections are being broadly misinterpreted by some employers to subvert the clear intent of the legislature in restricting the use of credit histories for hiring decisions in the majority of employment-related circumstances.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Matthew Lesser