



**Public Hearing Testimony of
Sharon Palmer, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 11, 2014**

Good Afternoon Senator Holder-Winfield, 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 **Senate Bill No. 249, AA Promoting Retirement Savings**. My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

I am here to speak in favor of the concept of this bill. Providing an opportunity to low-income private sector workers to invest in a retirement savings plan is good for all Connecticut residents. However, the administration of such a plan is a complex venture and will require oversight by those with expertise in this area. The Department of Labor has been tasked with receiving and investigating complaints by eligible employees who believe they have been aggrieved by any section of the proposed bill. The Department does not have any expertise in public retirement plans and would not be equipped to handle such complaints. Retirement savings plans and individual retirement accounts are not within the Department's jurisdiction, but would appear to be within the jurisdiction of other state agencies. This is a complex statutory scheme and Department of Labor staff does not have the specific qualifications needed to administer the complaints process of the proposed law. Assuming, however, that the Department is tasked with the enforcement of the proposed law, current staff would not be able to absorb the additional work.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. I am available to answer any questions you may have.