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Testimony

In Support of S.B 391 An Act Allowing Persons Who Are Sixteen And Seventeen Years Old To Work On Liquor Permit Establishment Premises.

General Law Committee
February 19, 2015

Dear Chairman Leone, Chairman Baram, Senator Witkos, Representative Carter and members of the General Law Committee

Thank you for drafting Proposed S.B. No. 391, **AN ACT ALLOWING PERSONS WHO ARE SIXTEEN AND SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD TO WORK ON LIQUOR PERMIT ESTABLISHMENT PREMISES**. I am strongly in support of this bill and find it unfortunate that the legislature even needs to draft it.

In 1982, the Connecticut legislature debated raising the drinking age from 18 to 19 years of age. As part of that debate, a concern arose on the impact of jobs and livelihoods of 18 year old individuals who owned bars, liquor stores, restaurants, or who worked as a bartender, waitress or a person who serves drinks. As a result, Connecticut passed C.G.S. 30-90a expressly permitting 18 year olds to work in and own liquor establishments.

The law has remained on the books unnoticed for years, serving as the enabling language for 18 year old bartenders. Recently, the Department of Consumer Protection has decided to interpret this permissive statute by creating a prohibition against 16 and 17 year olds from working as bussers, waitresses or cashiers in: restaurants, bowling alleys, amusement parks, colleges and universities, along with any other establishment that has a liquor permit.