



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 5848: AN ACT CONCERNING WOMEN RE-ENTERING THE WORKFORCE.

February 17, 2015

Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak, Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Matthew Brokman. I am a Legislative and Political Representative for Council 4 AFSCME. On behalf of the 32,000 public service employees we represent in Connecticut, we want to thank you for holding a public hearing on proposed HB 5848: An Act Concerning Women Re-Entering the Workforce.

Women are far more likely than men to take a leave of absence from their careers to take care of children or parents. This time out of the job market can have a profound effect on their future career prospect and earnings. According to research by Sylvia Ann Hewlett of the Center for Talent Innovation, 89% of women who took a leave of absence wanted to return to their former careers. However, only 40% of them succeeded in finding full-time jobs.

These women workers may need to update skills or resume writing assistance, but these programs are not always readily available. A recent report in the Washington Post found that programs to help these women job seekers that were privately funded prior to the 2008 recession have largely disappeared. This proposal can fill a critical need.

We believe that the state Department of Labor employment services staff are well-positioned to develop this program. These employees have implemented similar resume writing and skill building programs for veterans, the long-term unemployed, employees of companies hurt by foreign trade, and other targeted groups of workers.

We look forward to the opportunity to work with this committee and Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora, Representative Hoydick, Representative Miner, and Representative O'Niell to develop a training program for women re-entering the workforce.

Thank you.