



Testimony of  
**Melodie Peters, President**  
**AFT Connecticut, AFL-CIO**

Labor and Public Employees Committee  
March 3, 2015

***SB 984 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIONIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS,  
NONPARTISAN LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES AND STATE EDUCATION  
RESOURCE CENTER EMPLOYEES***

***HB 6930 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING***

***HB 6931 AN ACT CONCERNING NEW MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AND THE MUNICIPAL  
EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM***

Good afternoon Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Melodie Peters and I am the President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of union of nearly 29,000 public and private sector employees including state employees, nurses, healthcare workers, teachers and other school personnel.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 984 An Act Concerning the Unionization of Agricultural Workers, Nonpartisan Legislative Management Employees and State Education Resource Center Employees.

The right to collectively bargain benefits all workers. Open discussions between workers and management help to progress their industry forward and can restore our middle class. Employees should have a voice in their working conditions, and not be held to a standard set upon them without an open dialogue about the safest, and most effective possible practices. All employees should have this ability to unionize including the legislative employees for the very same reason. Choosing to be represented by a union should be an employees' right and not a privilege. By supporting SB 984 we are ensuring that the employees in our state have the best possible workplace protections.

***HB 6930 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING***

Allowing for regional collective bargaining may provide some benefits. This process should be closely studied first to identify which services can be provided on a regional level and not lose the effectiveness that makes our local services so valuable. Only through studying possible regional efficiencies can we organize an interlocal advisory board with a distinct outline of goals and perimeters to make these advisory boards effective.

***HB 6931 AN ACT CONCERNING NEW MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AND THE MUNICIPAL  
EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM***

This legislation seeks to transfer municipal employees from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan this weakens the goal of a secure retirement for our municipal employees. We oppose HB 6931.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on these very important bills.