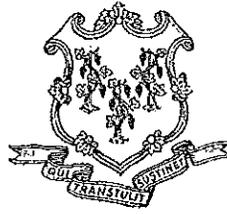


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Good afternoon Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. I would like to offer my support for **SB 106, AN ACT CONCERNING RETALIATION AGAINST IMMIGRANT WORKERS.**

SB 106 would prevent an employer from engaging in unfair immigration-related practices as retribution for an individual exercising his or her rights under state employment law. This bill would discourage unethical employers from violating laws such as minimum wage and maximum hours standards in the belief that employees can be intimidated into not reporting these violations. This legislation is similar to California AB 263 which was passed by the California state legislature and signed by Governor Brown in 2013.

The problem of workplace violations is particularly acute in service industries such as health care, child care, food services, and day labor. This legislation would assist in the effort to bring these violations out of the shadows and into the daylight. Often workers in these industries are paid low wages and work in unsafe workplaces. Those without documents are often excluded from the protection of core labor laws. This structural exclusion, coupled with lax labor law enforcement, undermines the economic security of all workers. We must not allow immigration status to be used as a tool to abuse employees.

The bill has an additional unrelated section which I also support. Section 2 would allow employees or labor organizations to recover twice the full amount of damages associated with an employer's failure to pay wages. This would create an incentive for employers to comply with the labor laws of our state. Thank you for hearing this important legislation.