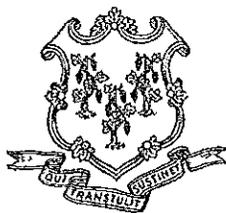


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March 5, 2015

Good morning Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. I am here to testify in support of **SB 426, AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYEE ONLINE PRIVACY.**

With the proliferation of social media, including sites like Facebook, some employers are trying to learn about their current and potential employees through online profiles. It is fairly common for employers to review applicants' public Facebook profiles and twitter accounts. However, many people utilize the privacy functions on social networking sites to make their profiles visible only to select people and groups. Some employers wish to intrude on the privacy of employees and job applicants by gaining access to these profiles. They may demand that applicants and employees hand over their private login information for personal accounts or that they login to sites during a job interview as a requirement of employment. I believe that these are extremely intrusive practices that must be strictly prohibited.

SB 426 includes provisions from a similar bill from last session. It would prohibit an employer from requesting or requiring an employee or job applicant to provide the employer with his or her password or other access to personal on-line accounts. It also bans an employer from demanding that a person login to an account in the employer's presence. An employer would be prohibited from firing, disciplining, or otherwise penalizing or retaliating against an employee or applicant who refuses to provide this information or who files a complaint against an employer who makes such a demand or request. In addition to the provisions from last year, SB 426 further prohibits employers from requiring an employee or a job applicant to accept or proffer a "friend request" or similar invitation to a private group on any online site. While the sending of such a request by anyone associated with the employer is not prohibited, given that personal relationships may exist between employers and applicants, what this bill prohibits is *requiring the acceptance of any such invitations as a condition of employment.*

I urge you to support SB 426 which I believe strikes the right balance between protecting the privacy of Connecticut citizens and employees, and protecting employers' proprietary information. Thank you.