

Testimony of
Stephen McKeever First Vice President, AFT Connecticut, AFL-CIO
Labor and Public Employees Committee Hearing
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SB 910 AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCULSION OF THE HISTORY OF THE WORKER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Good afternoon Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Stephen McKeever. I am the First Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of more than 90 local unions representing nearly 30,000 public and private sector employees. Our members include more than 15,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses and other school personnel across the state. It is on their behalf that I appear before you to testify on a two bills before you today.

I am here today to speak in support of SB 910, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of the History of the Worker in the Public School Curriculum. The labor movement has played a crucial role in the development and improvement of American society and economy. The labor movement has been instrumental in developing the middle class. It has advocated for fair working wages and pensions to allow people to retire with dignity. It brought us the 40 hour work week, workplace safety and grievance procedures just to name a few. These did not come without cost, people risked their jobs, jail time and sometimes their lives to bring about change. We teach our children how our society progressed from an agricultural society to an industrial society, but too often textbooks focus on industry and their role in the economy and not enough discussion of the working people who struggled to bring about the middle class. SB 910 requires labor history and the struggles of organized labor be taught.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this very important bill, and I urge you to support SB 910.