



CONNECTICUT

TESTIMONY OF
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)
CONCERNING
HB-5124, AAC CONSECUTIVE WORKDAYS AND HOLIDAY PAY;
HB-5265, AAC MINIMUM LONGEVITY REQUIREMENTS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS
BEFORE THE
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
JANUARY 29, 2015

A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees. NFIB membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to "Main Street" small businesses to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, NFIB/Connecticut offers the following comments:

NFIB/Connecticut has concerns with HB-5124, and suggests rejection. This bill appears to be a new state mandate and is unnecessary for modern workplaces. Many small businesses operate six days a week; their potential employees know this prior to accepting employment; and any scheduling or pay issues that may rarely arise are simply worked out between the employee and the employer without government intervention. Small businesses in the retail sector, services sector, automotive repair, contractors, and many others operate on a six day work-week, often out of necessity. As such, this legislation seems to penalize employers who may simply be responding to consumer/customer demand by being open as they see fit. Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and NFIB urges lawmakers to take no action on HB-5124.

NFIB/Connecticut supports the intent of HB-5265. This bill, which would require employees to be employed for a minimum period of time – 30 days – before becoming eligible for unemployment benefits, would help address issues in the unemployment compensation system from an employers' perspective. A waiting period seems to reflect that desire that an employee earn a minimum amount of wages in order to file a claim. In conjunction with or in lieu of a waiting period, it would be prudent for the legislature to consider increasing the required earnings thresholds for an employee as well. Such a measure could help shore up an overburdened system. It must be noted, that Connecticut's small businesses have been straining under high unemployment taxes for some time now and have also suffered from recent surcharges. In order to ease this burden on our state's job creators, NFIB/Connecticut recommends that significant changes need to be made to the eligibility and administration of the state's unemployment benefits system in order to maintain long- term solvency and to ensure the fiscal health of our state's employers.



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Beyond looking at increasing the earnings threshold or instituting a waiting period for eligibility, this could include additional efforts to target waste and fraud in the system and also to tighten up the work-search requirements and address the suitability of such for those receiving benefits. NFIB/Connecticut would be happy to work with the Committee, the Labor Department, others in the Administration and Legislature on these important matters.