



Testimony of
Melodie Peters, President
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Labor and Public Employees Committee
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***SB 910 AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF THE HISTORY OF THE WORKER IN
THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM***

***HB 6783 AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE UNIONIZATION OF COLLEGE
ATHLETES***

***HB 6787 AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXAMINATION PROCESS FOR CERTAIN CLASSES
OF POSITIONS IN THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE***

HB 6785 AN ACT CONCERNING COOPERATIVE HEALTH CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Good afternoon Senator Winfield, 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 910 An Act Concerning the Inclusion of the History of the Worker in the Public School Curriculum.

The history of the worker has shaped the American history and the American dream. It is through the living wages that the American worker fought for, that brought about the possibility of a white picket fence. It is the 8-hour day and the 40-hour work week that has given life the American ideal of a pursuit of happiness. It is only through the child labor laws and workplace safety protections that American workers demanded, that has led to the nuclear family that is idolized. It is only through studying these fights that we are able to fully appreciate what America has become and how our students can lead America to a brighter future.

***HB 6783 AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE UNIONIZATION OF COLLEGE
ATHLETES***

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. The college athletes in our state provide a clear service to our colleges and universities. The services that the college athletes provide is an economic driver for these colleges and

universities. As a driver for economic benefit within these colleges and universities the individuals should have a voice in their working conditions, and not be held to a standard set upon them without an open dialogue and without another avenue to higher employment in their field. 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 HB 6783 we are ensuring that our college athletes have the same workplace protections that we would expect for one of the Nation's most decorated workforce, our student athletes.

HB 6787 AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXAMINATION PROCESS FOR CERTAIN CLASSES OF POSITIONS IN THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE

HB 6787 would add a waiver process allowing our state employees to extend their promotional examinations to a seven year period. Currently our state employees are taking these examinations multiple times within that period. This is an inefficient process, when we take into consideration that these examinations are not changing at this dramatic pace. The president of AFT Connecticut's A&R Local has had to deal with the frustrations that come up from our state employees taking an examination multiple times when the employee has stayed proficient at their job and there has been no change to the examination. This bill makes sense both fiscally for our employees with the loss of time due to the preparation and examination, and for our state in administering these tests. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with the Commissioner and the department of Administrative Services to resolve this issue. I urge you to support HB 6787.

HB 6785 AN ACT CONCERNING COOPERATIVE HEALTH CARE ARRANGEMENTS

We support HB 6785 with the additional language that is provided in AFSCME President, Sal Luciano's testimony. Expanding the healthcare for our municipal employees makes smart fiscal sense for our State and can lead to a healthier workforce and that can provide a cost savings for our municipalites.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on this very important bill. I urge you to support these bills.