



LOCAL 478 • CONNECTICUT

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

1965 Dixwell Avenue • Hamden, Connecticut 06514

Testimony of Tiana Ocasio

Referral Assistant and Marketing Representative, IUOE Local 478

For the Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 24, 2015

Good evening Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak and the other Honorable members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My Name is Tiana Ocasio and I am the Referral assistant and Marketing Representative for the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 478, a labor organization that represents over 3,000 members and their families in Connecticut.

I have worked in the Construction Industry for close to 14 years and I have been able to witness firsthand the impact on a family when a worker is laid off. Because we are seasonal workers (due to the weather), on average a construction worker works anywhere from 200-800 hours less than the traditional fulltime worker.

Construction jobs are typically short term. You start and end a certain phase of a project and then you move on to a different jobsite or most of the time a different employer.

An average construction worker can have over six different employers in any given year. Forcing them to have a waiting week when filing for unemployment could be devastating to a family that already works paycheck to paycheck.

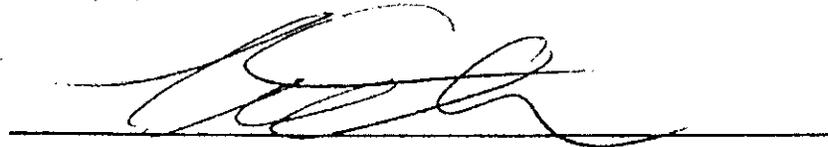
Construction workers are out here working in zero degree weather as we speak and in the summer they work in the sweltering heat. They do not want to be laid off; they want to go to work.

Collecting Unemployment helps them keep a roof over their head and put food on the table.

Workers should not have to live in fear that their benefits would be decreased if they are laid off while between phases of a project or because of the weather, which are both out of the workers control.

On behalf of the 3,000 members that I represent, I strongly oppose any and all proposed bills that would modify or change unemployment compensation benefits.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. L. ...", is written over a solid horizontal line.

1. Proposed S.B. No. 436 AN ACT CONCERNING THE WAITING WEEK AND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. (LAB)
2. Proposed S.B. No. 437 AN ACT CONCERNING MINIMUM EARNINGS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. (LAB)
3. Proposed S.B. No. 442 AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM EARNINGS NECESSARY TO QUALIFY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. (LAB)
4. Proposed S.B. No. 447 AN ACT CONCERNING UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AND ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTENDED BENEFITS. (LAB)
5. Proposed H.B. No. 5611 AN ACT CONCERNING ELIGIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. (LAB)
6. Proposed H.B. No. 5850 AN ACT CONCERNING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS. (LAB)
7. Proposed H.B. No. 5851 AN ACT CONCERNING UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION REFORM. (LAB)
8. Proposed H.B. No. 5864 AN ACT CONCERNING UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION ELIGIBILITY AND TIME-SPECIFIC WORK ASSIGNMENTS. (LAB)
9. Proposed H.B. No. 5867 AN ACT CONCERNING INTEREST DUE ON ADVANCES FROM THE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION ADVANCE FUND. (LAB)
10. Proposed H.B. No. 5869 AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL EMPLOYERS, UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AND THE APPEALS PROCESS. (LAB)
11. Proposed H.B. No. 5872 AN ACT CONCERNING MONTHLY APPEARANCES AT THE UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE. (LAB)