

Labor and Public Employees Committee
January 29, 2015
Senate Bill 593 – Support
House Bill 5070 – Oppose
House Bill 5211 - Oppose

Senator Holder-Winfield, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Stephen Anderson and I am the President of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, a labor union which represents thousands of workers employed in state and municipal government, and in the private sector.

I submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 593, an act concerning severe mental and emotional impairment and workers' compensation coverage. Though we support this legislation, we would like to echo concerns that this bill falls short by not including all employees' conditions stemming from any traumatic workplace incident. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a harsh reality of the world we live in. PTSD affects whole body, inside and out and workers who experience PTSD as a result of their jobs are no different than workers who have other kinds of workplace injuries. Events which cause PTSD are on the rise and workers should be compensated for those injuries. Workers affected by PTSD may never be able to put that horrific day behind them, but this bill, if passed will provide peace of mind to the families that workers' compensation will be available to help.

I am additionally submitting testimony to oppose House Bill No. 5070, an act concerning timetables for municipal binding arbitration, and House Bill No. 5211, an act concerning unfair labor practices and arbitration decision timelines. We oppose these two similar Bills because neither binding arbitration nor unfair labor practice arbitrations break town budgets, this is a red herring. The real issue is the wasteful practice of hiring armies of expensive outside law firms for matters that should be handled by our towns' and municipalities' chief elected officials. We should insist our elected officials take responsibility, and stop paying outside lawyers to do a job they should be doing themselves. In order to preserve a fair process, arbitrary time limits on arbitrations should not be something the legislature considers.

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