

Labor and Public Employees Committee
February 26, 2015
Testimony of Ellen Blaschinski, President
Association of Managerial Employees in Connecticut State Service (AMECSS)

Senate Bill 909-An Act Concerning Managers in State Service

The Association of Managerial Employees in Connecticut State Service (AMECSS) strongly supports SB 909. This bill provides equity in the definition and use of the term "manager" across state government. Passage of SB 909 will ensure that the term managerial employees as defined in the Connecticut General Statutes is applied consistently throughout all state agencies.

AMECSS is a professional association of managerial employees in Connecticut state service. There are approximately 1,800 managers currently working in state service. The existing definition of manager is restricted to use in just one area of state government, Higher Education. It is estimated that most of the 1,800 "managers" in state service are like their colleagues in Higher Education, they do not have a major role in the administration of collective bargaining agreements or even major personnel decisions, including hiring, firing, discipline or promotion of their staff. This bill ensures that one definition of manager is used across state government. Most managers in state service are individuals who have made careers in public service; often men and women who started in entry level positions and through hard work, dedication and commitment rose to positions of responsibility. As such their classification as "manager" should be consistent across state government.

Since 2007 the number of managers in Connecticut state service has declined by nearly 30 percent¹. This decline has occurred due to reductions in state spending (position eliminations), retirements and a general perception that managerial service is undesirable. To become a manager in Connecticut state service is agreeing to salary compression and even salary inversion as compared to the collective bargaining supervisory positions that "managers" oversee. To become a manager in Connecticut state service means accepting the SEBAC negotiated terms applied to all Connecticut state employees with no vote or representation in these agreements. It means receiving every one of the negatives of the SEBAC agreements such as furlough days, wage freezes, retirement benefit changes, health insurance changes while being completely excluded from every one of the positives such as job protection, guaranteed wage increases, and preservation of longevity. Being a manager in Connecticut state service currently means being treated worse than every other state employee².

Support of SB 909 creates an opportunity to treat managers equally across state government. The members of AMECSS hope you vote in favor of our fair treatment.

Thank you for raising SB 909 and your consideration of our perspective on this issue.

¹ Current Issues With Managerial Compensation in State Government, State of Connecticut, Department of Administrative Services, May, 2012

² December, 2012 Arbitration, The State of Connecticut And SEBAC, Gr: Managerial Longevity