

Testimony RE: HB 5886

Before House Planning & Development Committee Friday, Feb. 16, 2015

TO: House Planning Committee Chair the Hon. Philip J. Miller, Vice Chair
Michael D'Agostino and Committee Members

DATE: Feb. 10, 2015

FROM: Mrs. Gail E Janensch, 3030 Park Ave., Cottage 12, Bridgeport, CT
06604 Resident of House District 127

As a resident of the City of Bridgeport and a member of the Bridgeport Area League of Women Voters, I thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony on behalf of **HB 5886**. I am unable to attend in person due to family business out of state.

AN ACT PROHIBITING MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES FROM SERVING ON CERTAIN MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE BODIES

This legislation has been introduced by my Bridgeport friend the Hon. Rep. "Jack" Hennessy, 127th Dist. and is supported by my friend the Hon. Sen. Marilyn Moore, who serves my residential neighborhood.

The goal of this legislation is to end something that is patently harmful to the public interest. It deals with a practice in Bridgeport that should be branded as "self dealing." Our state and city needs help in restoring public confidence in good government. My City, rightly or wrongly, is viewed as tainted by actual corruption or the appearance of it. "Only in Bridgeport" is an aptly titled blog that chronicles deeds and misdeeds of leaders that would not happen anywhere else.

As you all know this legislation is aimed at closing a loophole in state statute that allows City of Bridgeport employees to serve as elected members of the Bridgeport City Council where as members they get to vote on the City of Bridgeport budget that includes money for salaries of employees. This bill will extend the ban on city employees serving on their local boards of finance to include the City Council. Ironically, Bridgeport already bans this practice in its city charter, but due to a loophole in state statute, the city has been able to ignore this ban.

Close this loophole. You had the chance to do so in the past, but let that chance slip through your fingers. I urge you not to let that happen this session. Please pass this bill out of committee to allow more discussion. I believe this time the Bridgeport delegation to the House and the Senate will be more ready to lend support to a bill that seeks to transform "Black Hat" Bridgeport into a "White Hat" city. Thank you.

Gail E. Janensch
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