

March 28, 2016

Good Afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Berger and the esteemed members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

My name is Vincent Fusco. I am proud to represent the members of the Hartford Fire Fighters Association, IAFF Local 760 and the approximately 4000 professional firefighters across the State thru the Uniformed Professional Firefighters of Connecticut. I sit before you today to voice our strong opposition to SB 464 (An Act Establishing the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission). This legislation directly eliminates the collective bargaining rights of all the hard working employees of the City of Hartford and the Hartford Board of Education.

Current labor law already provides for a fair and equitable framework for all parties involved. There is a process to start negotiations to seek contractual savings. Many of the current Contracts are expiring this July or are already expired. The Mayor has not even attempted to negotiate with the employees in any productive or meaningful manner, instead He is attempting to push legislation that will place the balance of power solely with himself. He has the ability to seek the contractual changes through the negotiation process but refused to, instead seeking this attack legislation that removes our rights.

This bill is has been portrayed by Mayor Bronin as many things in the media and in the community. What he has not yet done is be honest as to the Unions willingness to negotiate solutions. All of our individual unions have a history of providing concessions in tough times and are willing to have these difficult discussions again. The Mayor has been more focused on eliminating our rights at the Capitol. This is all valuable time that would be better served sitting at the bargaining table to find real solutions to Hartford's problems.

I urge the members of this committee to stand with our members in opposition to this bill.

Thank you for time,

Vincent Fusco
Chairman, Legislative Committee, U.P.F.F.A
President, Hartford Fire Fighters Assoc, IAFF 760

