



**Public Hearing Testimony of
Scott Jackson, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 8, 2016**

Good Afternoon Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak, Senator Hwang, Representative Rutigliano and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with testimony regarding **Senate Bill No. 393, An Act Concerning Domestic Workers**. My name is Scott Jackson and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

The proposed bill provides certain legal protections and benefits to individuals performing domestic work in private homes. Many of the provisions of this bill would have a fiscal impact on the Department of Labor (DOL). The bill proposes to add "domestic workers" to the definition of "employee" in the wage and hour laws, which would expand the population of possible complainants and thus increase the number of claims that would need to be enforced.

In addition, the bill includes significant enforcement provisions that would be administered by DOL. Specifically, a domestic worker could file a complaint with DOL alleging a violation based on the employer's failure to provide the proposed notice of the terms and conditions of employment; the failure to provide the required paid time off; infringement of the domestic worker's privacy rights and intrusion into his/her living quarters; improper notice of termination of employment (including a determination of whether the employer properly terminated the domestic worker for wilful misconduct); discrimination and retaliation. Such enforcement would require an investigation of the complaint and, if the employer opposed the finding of a violation, a full administrative hearing to produce a final decision necessary to appeal to Superior Court. Implementing the provisions in this proposed bill will require the Department to expend significant resources, which are not presently available, and therefore additional funding would be needed.

Finally, the bill proposes that DOL could contract with community based and legal services organizations, in order to represent domestic works in a civil suit. DOL has no funding to contract with these organizations. Therefore, DOL must respectfully oppose this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.