

February 19, 2016

Appropriations Committee

House Bill 5044: An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures for The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017

Good Afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Dave Glidden and I serve as the Executive Director for CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, a labor union that represents thousands of workers across our state, including several thousand hard working, dedicated state employees.

State Employees, both in their official positions and as tax payers in Connecticut hate seeing our state waste money. One of the most common complaints our members share is that outside consultants are being wildly overused for work that should be done in-house by state employees. Witnessing such waste is especially hard now when some are suggesting that the state balance its budget on the backs of state employees and their families. Imagine the frustration you would feel if your boss hired someone to perform work that you could do better and at less expense, and then turn around and tell you that he or she could no longer afford to pay you or provide fair benefits.

In 2007, by passing landmark clean contracting legislation, the General Assembly took bold steps to fix the problem of unwise, wasteful contracting. Part of that legislation created the State Contracting Standards Board, an independent entity designed to act as watchdog and ensure that state contracting reflects the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and cost effectiveness. The passage of this legislation was a bright moment for our state, full of great promise going forward. Unfortunately, it has never lived up to that promise.

That's because the Board has had continual issues even getting off the ground. It has rarely had the necessary quorum to conduct its meetings, due in part to the Governor's failure to make the necessary appointments. In addition, the Board is not staffed in a manner that is necessary for it

to successfully execute its mission. Without proper oversight from the Board, state agencies often simply ignore the components of the law that require rudimentary analysis to take place before contracting work out.

The unbridled use of private consults has negative ripple effects. Our state employee members live and work here in Connecticut. When the State spends money on its own workforce, not only is it frequently more cost effective, but that money goes back into Connecticut's economy, which is needed now more than ever. When the state hires contractors, there is no guarantee that those workers even live in this state.

The State cannot afford to continue its business as usual approach to contracting out. No more should work that could be performed by existing staff go out the door. That is unconscionable waste. We call upon the General Assembly to take the necessary steps to bolster and strengthen this important legislation.

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