

**Education Committee**

**March 7, 2016**

**House Bill 5557: An Act Concerning Recruitment and Retention of Early Childhood Educators  
Senate Bill 383: An Act Concerning the Technical High School System**

Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Stephen Anderson and I am the President of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, a Connecticut labor union which represents thousands of public and private-sector workers, as well as thousands of retired public employees. **I am testifying today on behalf of CSEA.**

**House Bill No. 5557:**

CSEA supports House Bill No. 5557: An Act Concerning Recruitment and Retention of Early Childhood Educators. Connecticut places a high value on quality early care and education by insisting that center-based staff serving the most vulnerable children have a college degree that demonstrates competence in nurturing young children to arrive in kindergarten ready to learn. However, childcare remains one of the lowest paid professions in the United States today. This fact makes both recruitment and retention a serious problem in the industry. House Bill No. 5557 creates a system whereby compensation of the early childhood workforce is seen as a measure of quality. It sets up an infrastructure that can be implemented once more funding becomes available. Until then, it also sends a message to the profession that the State values the contribution of the child care workforce and is addressing compensation in a way that is in keeping with our current fiscal constraints. We encourage the committee to support House Bill No. 5557.

**Senate Bill No. 383:**

CSEA supports Senate Bill No. 383: An Act Concerning the Technical High School System. The Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) provides a unique service to the state of Connecticut and is committed to ensuring that Connecticut continues to maintain a talented workforce. Unfortunately, this ability has been compromised for years now. As part of a larger agency, CTHSS must abide by the State Department of Education's hiring process. Over the past twenty years, this system has been studied at least five times so we know a great deal about the changes that need to be made. The most recent, a 2011 task force produced recommendations in line with what this legislation proposes. The purpose of S.B. No. 383 is to designate the superintendent of the technical high school system as an administrative head for purposes of carrying out the responsibilities associated with the technical high school system budget. With this bill, the CTHSS is seeking hiring autonomy so that the Superintendent of Schools can have the same flexibility as any local superintendent to hire and recruit talented teachers. Right now, the multi-layered agency process takes months to complete. Presently, there are 74 vacancies that have remained unfilled for the 2015-2016 School Year. Twenty-nine (29) of these vacancies are teachers. I am sure you can appreciate the need to have qualified trade instructors that produce talented graduates from the system. Additionally, this legislation seeks to continue CTHSS's fiscal autonomy from the State Department of Education, which allows the Superintendent to not only make hiring

decisions, but also fiscal decisions that directly impact teaching, learning, and health and safety issues in the 18 regional technical schools. We encourage you to pass S.B. No. 383.

Steve Anderson  
President, CSEA SEIU Local 2001