

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE
NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

TESTIMONY OF LESLIE A. WILLIAMSON, JR.

Good morning Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. My name is Lee Williamson. It is my honor and privilege to be reappointed by Governor Malloy to the State Department of Education Arbitration Panel as a neutral arbitrator. In conjunction with this reappointment, I welcome the opportunity to appear before you today.

The arbitration process under the Teacher Negotiation Act is extraordinarily important for boards of education, teachers, administrators, municipalities and taxpayers. Neutral arbitrators, i.e., those representing the interests of the public in general, play an important role in this process. I believe my education, experience, professionalism as well as the respect I have garnered from those who have presented cases before me and from my fellow arbitrators qualifies me to continue as a neutral arbitrator on this panel.

I received my BA from the University of Connecticut. After serving as a Lieutenant in the US Army, I entered state service in the former State Personnel Department as a Connecticut Career Trainee advancing to the position of Principal Personnel Analyst. During this time, I received my Masters Degree in Political Science from Trinity College and then commenced law school, leaving state service for my last two years at law school.

I received my JD, with honors, from Western New England College School of Law, where I was a Teaching Assistant and member and Editor of the Law Review. Upon graduation, I accepted employment as an attorney with the State Department of Education. One of my primary responsibilities at the SDE was the administration of the Teacher Negotiation Act, then in its second year of binding arbitration.

In 2003, after more than 25 years of state service, I retired in order to devote full time to arbitration, mediation and conflict management training. I currently serve as a mediator and neutral interest arbitrator with the Department of Education. I am also a neutral interest arbitrator with the Connecticut State Board of Mediation and Arbitration. In addition, I am the Chair of the State of Connecticut Employees' Review Board, which hears grievance appeals from non-unionized state employees.

Beyond these Connecticut panels, I serve on labor and employment arbitration panels with: The American Arbitration Association; the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; the American Dispute Resolution Center; the Massachusetts Human Resources Division; the New Hampshire Public Employees Labor Relations Board; the Rhode Island Department of Labor; and, on a pre-arbitration review panel with the National Air Traffic Controllers Association and the Federal Aviation Administration.

I am a frequent speaker on conflict management, mediation and arbitration and an active Steering Committee member and past President of the Connecticut Valley Chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association.

With your approval, I am eager to continue my service as a Department of Education arbitrator representing the interests of the public.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome the opportunity to respond to any questions you might have.