



CONNECTICUT EMPLOYEES UNION INDEPENDENT

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**Testimony by Ron McLellan, President
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Raised SB 439-An Act Concerning the State Contracting Standards Board and
Requirements for Privatization Contracts
Government Administration and Elections Committee
Public Hearing: March 18, 2016**

Connecticut Employees Union Independent (CEUI), SEIU Local 511 is writing in support of Raised Senate Bill 439, An Act Concerning the State Contracting Standards Board and Requirements for Privatization Contracts. This bill takes further steps to require State agencies to perform due diligence before contracting out work. In our experience, we see a very loose system where State agencies don't have control over what services are contracted out or whether they make financial/practical sense. Rather, it is looked at as the easiest path to getting a job done, rather than the most financially sound path.

CEUI represents approximately 4,000 Maintenance and Service State employees at most State agencies. Our members regularly report that contractors are doing work that they could be doing during the regular workday with existing staff, but due to bureaucratic roadblocks, contractors are brought in to do their work. In addition to the bureaucratic roadblocks preventing State employees from performing the work, the oversight of the contractors is weak and does not ensure that we are getting what we pay for. There are many examples of our members having to go back to fix or repair shoddy work after a contractor has been paid and is long gone. It is much easier for managers to have the State worker remedy problems than hold a contractor accountable.

Not only do our members routinely have to repair work done by contractors, we frequently find that the contractors do not comply with safety regulations or sound work practices. Sometimes they do not hold proper licenses and have numerous safety violations in other states, cities, or towns. This is not to say that all contractors are bad or that no contracting makes sense.

What we are saying is that the system needs much more oversight and structure to prevent wasting precious financial resources and make sure that the State gets acceptable work product and services. The analysis needs to be done in determining the true cost of contracting out work. While not filling State employee vacancies and eliminating jobs may be a great political headline, we are paying a huge price that in many cases comes at a cost that we can not afford.

