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AFT Healthcare

Testimony of  
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Judiciary Committee Public Hearing  
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***HB 5402 An Act Concerning the Extension of Whistleblower Protections to an Employee Who Reports a Suspected Violation of Law to the Employee's Supervisor or Manager***

Good afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Tong and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Donna Maronde, President of University Health Professionals (UHP), AFT Local 3837, representing 2,500 professional non-faculty employees at the University of Connecticut Health Center. I am here to testify in favor of HB 5402.

This bill would allow an employee to report either verbally or in writing what is perceived or known to be a violation of federal, state or municipal law without fear of retaliation. This same employee might be penalized by the manager or supervisor and suffer serious loss of compensation, salary and other damages, both economic and emotional that they would now be able to recover.

It is not unusual for employees who bring forward unethical or illegal practices to suffer extreme retaliation and harassment to point that they are forced to resign a job or position they truly love. The mismanagement and abuse of authority at the root of this suffering should not go unpunished and the employee's ability to recover financially should be protected. The ability to recover the litigation and other fees is the very minimum that should be covered.

We should be protecting these rights and encouraging employees to come forward with what they know or suspect are violations. We should not restrict those same timelines for them to seek remedies for any action taken against them by the reported offenders.

I ask that you extend the timelines for these employees so that courageous Whistleblowers receive our gratitude for doing the right thing, rather than be punished or suffer economic loss.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. I urge you to support HB 5402.