



Testimony of  
**Lori J. Pelletier, President**  
**Connecticut AFL-CIO**  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
February 16, 2017

***HB 5591 An Act Concerning Pay Equity in the Workforce***

Good afternoon Representative Porter, Senator Gomes, Senator Miner and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. I am Lori Pelletier and I am proud to serve as President of the Connecticut AFL-CIO on behalf over 900 affiliated local unions who represent more than 220,000 working men and women in every city and town of our great state. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 5591 An Act Concerning Pay Equity in the Workforce.

We support this legislation and all efforts to eliminate gender-based pay inequity. On average, Connecticut women are paid 83 cents for every dollar a male worker is paid. The disparity is even greater for women of color. That's a significant loss for each woman, but businesses and our economy also suffer greatly. Lost wages mean diminished consumer buying power, which drives down economic growth.

Women in unions working under negotiated collective bargaining agreements are more likely to be paid higher, fairer wages and have better access to health insurance and pensions. More must be done to afford those same protections to non-union female workers. We urge the Committee to support HB 5591 and add protections for workers who seek to form a union, such as prohibiting captive audience meetings.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.