



**Testimony of  
William Garrity RN, President,  
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HB5001 -AN ACT PREVENTING OVERTIME PAYMENTS FROM BEING USED TO  
CALCULATE THE RETIREMENT INCOME OF STATE EMPLOYEES

Appropriations Committee  
3/24/17

Good Afternoon Senator Formica, Senator Osten, Representative Walker and the members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Bill Garrity and I have been a Registered Nurse at UCONN Health for more than 20 years. I've worked in both the Bone Marrow Transplant Oncology Unit and the last 4 years I worked in the Emergency Department. I am also President of University Health Professionals, AFT Local 3837 and an elected Vice President at AFT Connecticut. I am here to testify against **HB 5001 AN ACT PREVENTING OVERTIME PAYMENTS FROM BEING USED TO CALCULATE THE RETIREMENT INCOME OF STATE EMPLOYEES**, and all other bills similar to HB 5001.

I represent 2700 members covering many different job titles. Many of them are health care workers that, at times, are forced to stay at work, Mandatory Overtime. We are not allowed to leave the patient's care. Either by acuity of patients or staffing levels done by the hospital, we are forced to stay. I want to say that again, forced to stay. The first time I testified here at the capital was about 20 years ago, it was on the issue of trying to eliminate Mandatory Overtime. 20 years later I'm here fighting to make sure we get compensated for the time we are forced to stay beyond our shifts.

State employees seem to be a convenient target at this time of year. I hear reports of bloated pensions, but the OFA Fact sheet: State Employee Retirement System, dated January 2017 reports the Average of all Retirees Pensions is \$36,226. Again, AVERAGE of all Retirees Pensions \$36,226. It looks to me like you have a very small subset of the pool of state employees and again the message is being skewed to paint state employees in a very bad light. If staffing levels were appropriate, overtime would be a rare occurrence. If you have a problem with a handful of people, address the handful of people. Instead of attacking 50,000 state employees.

I work with Nurses, Medical Assistants, Radiology staff, Laboratory staff, and any number of state employees working at UCONN Health. People working in a 24-hour facility, taking care of the sick and in some cases dying of Connecticut. Working hard for the people of Connecticut. I sit here before you to testify:

"we are not the enemy, we are not the problem, don't make us the scapegoat"

At least 15 bills including HB5001 were put forward eliminating overtime payments and differentials to retirement calculations. Some of these bills state Base Pay. You want to lump all state employees together, I'm going to lump these bills together. These are bad bills if enacted. You are looking to directly harm healthcare workers like myself that have dedicated many years of our lives to working 2nd or 3rd shift. I'm asking you keep the promises that have been made to us in the past.

HB 5001 and all those similar, will hurt state employees' futures and further tip the scales away from financial security during their retirement.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, I would be happy to try to answer any question you may have.