

Testimony of Mary Gallucci, Ph.D.,
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RE: Proposed Senate Bill No. 596 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFINITION OF
MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEE.

I wish to testify against this bill, which has been proposed to “amend” or clarify who counts as a worker with the rights to collective bargaining.

I will speak specifically to the effect S.B. No. 596 would have on universities and colleges in the state of Connecticut. This amendment would exclude faculty from the ability to form unions. It would categorize faculty as managers, a fact that would cause injury and injustice to the profession.

The proposed amendment in S.B. No. 596 would cause injury by depriving faculty of collective bargaining, which in turn would have a negative impact on academic freedom. It would have a chilling effect on the classroom, as faculty would fear teaching subject matter of a controversial or sensitive nature. As Human Rights Watch has written, “Protection of the right to organize and bargain collectively, a bedrock requirement of international labor rights norms, is denied” to workers when they are excluded from labor law protections by being designated as managers. https://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/uslabor/USLBR008-08.htm#P1990_487557

S.B. No. 596 would cause injustice by mislabeling faculty as managers. University faculty do not have supervisory responsibilities with regard to how the university is run nor do they manage an “enterprise” as typically associated with management. University faculty “do not in practice have genuine managerial functions and may desire protection like other workers,” as observed in the report by Human Rights Watch (link above). In addition, Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which the United States is a signatory, states “everyone [has] the right to form and join trade (labor unions) for the protection of his or her interests.”

University faculty do research on problems both contemporary and historical; they teach and mentor students who will be the future teachers, lawyers, doctors, care-givers, and citizens of our state, our country, and our world. To categorize faculty as “managers” would suggest that they hire and fire students rather than instruct and mentor them. If a student has difficulties in a certain subject, a faculty member seeks every way to aid that student. A managerial model of the classroom, of the laboratory, or of the conference room is antithetical to the goals of a research and learning environment.

S.B. No. 596 would have implications beyond the university, impacting the human rights of faculty. Academic freedom and job security are essential for the most rigorous teaching and research to flourish. A strong collective bargaining agreement for college and university faculty is a signal benefit to society because it safeguards laboratories and classrooms from undue corporate or government interference.

Respectfully submitted,

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