



**CONNECTICUT  
RECREATION & PARKS  
ASSOCIATION**

135 Day Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 2H  
Newington, CT 06111  
Phone: 860.721.0384  
Fax: 860.529.8708  
Email: info@crpa.com  
Web: www.crpa.com

**Testimony in Opposition to  
SB 2 An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage  
HB 5004 An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage  
HB 7191 An Act Increasing the Minimum Wage**

**March 7, 2019  
Labor & Public Employees Committee**

Good afternoon Chairs: Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and ranking and distinguished members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee.

My name is Ray Favreau. I am the Legislative Committee Chair, and past president of the **Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc. (CRPA)**. I am also the Director of Parks and Recreation for the Town of South Windsor, in my 33rd year of service to this great community. CRPA represents over 700 individual professionals from municipal, nonprofit and private, park, recreation & camp organizations, as well as **131** of the 169 municipalities in Connecticut. The Town of South Windsor is a 29 square mile suburban community with a population of roughly 26,000.

**For the record, CRPA firmly opposes SB 2, HB 5004 & HB 7191.**

In South Windsor alone, the proposed incremental increase of 48.6% to \$15/hour over the next 4-5 years will require us to add an estimated \$400,000 to our budget to support a payroll for 200 part-time and seasonal full-time employees. The impact to our program budget by the time it reaches \$15/hour is astronomical. To accommodate such an increase my department will be forced to increase all user fees to our programs, rendering us unaffordable. Park and recreation programs are one of the only affordable options for summer youth programs and childcare. **This unfunded state mandate is hindering its municipalities' ability to offer affordable childcare and programs to residents.**

The vast majority of our seasonal employees are students, between the age of 15 and 23, who are seeking supplemental funds in their quest for an education that will advance them from a "learning" minimum wage to an eventual higher-paying "living" wage. The impact is not just at the entry level. The wage compression created has a tremendous "trickle up" effect on proportional wage increases necessary for veteran seasonal employees and seasonal employees with supervisory responsibilities. Additionally, it has boarder effect on our year-round full-time professional staff. I cannot have veteran staff and supervisors making the same wage, or less than the very people they supervise.

This increase further impacts other line items in our town budgets. For example, vendors we do business with will raise their prices on goods and services to cover increases in their own payroll expenses. We in turn will have to further increase our user fees to generate the needed revenue to offset the increased costs of maintaining our programs, parks, and facilities, on top of our own increased payroll expenses.

If the market cannot bear these increases, we, like many other organizations, will be forced to reduce services offered to our residents. That is an unfortunate regression in progress. It's a vicious cycle. **Reducing access to affordable recreational opportunities is the antithesis of combating the childhood obesity epidemic, the opioid crisis, and other health related medical conditions exacerbated by inactivity.**

A quick survey of our membership found that it financially impacts other communities similarly, including both small towns and larger cities. The following are examples of a \$15/hour increase in labor costs only:

Fairfield	\$363,270
Manchester	\$203,000 <i>(source: Journal Inquirer 12/29/18)</i>
Milford	\$175,000
Oxford	\$256,900
South Windsor	\$400,000

The phased in increase to the current minimum wage of \$10.10 was a challenge. We did not oppose it when it was passed by this legislature, however we cannot bear another increase so soon, especially such a dramatic one.

Park and recreation professionals want to accommodate everyone regardless of their economic situation. Meeting increased payroll costs will most definitely limit funds available for other services like financial assistance and scholarships for those in need.

Many communities throughout Connecticut are experiencing difficulty in maintaining programs and services with **shrinking state aid, additional un-funded mandates such as minimum wage increases, new sales tax proposed on services like day camps and swim lessons, tolls, predictive scheduling, and a required budget cap of 2.5%**. This bill, if passed, squeezes even more blood out of a stone.

My colleagues and I are in the parks & recreation profession to promote, deliver and positively affect the health and well-being of our residents. In order to do so, we need to be affordable, frugal, and accessible.

In conclusion, we appreciate the intent of this bill, but we are fearful of the detrimental impact implementation will have on parks & recreation departments state-wide. It will **limit affordable access to our programs, especially before and after school, childcare, and learn-to-swim programs**, as a result of the necessary increase in user fees to support them. It will cause a **reduction in services to our residents**. It will limit funds available for scholarships to our programs for those in need. It will **decrease our capacity to employ** and, it will limit our ability to maintain our parks and facilities. **For all these reasons, CRPA urges you to vote no on SB 2, HB 5004, and HB 7191. A negative vote on these bills is a step in the right direction in preserving and protecting affordable, essential services that our parks & recreation profession is dedicated to providing and our residents deserve.**

This completes my testimony. Thank you for your time. I look forward to answering your questions.

**Ray Favreau, CPRP**

Legislative Committee Chair, Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc.  
Director of Parks and Recreation, Town of South Windsor



**CONNECTICUT  
RECREATION & PARKS  
ASSOCIATION**

135 Day Street, 2nd Floor, 2H  
Newington, CT 06111  
Phone: 860-721-0384  
Fax: 860-529-8708  
Email: info@crpa.com  
Web: www.crpa.com

**Testimony on behalf of  
The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc.  
Before the Labor Committee  
March 7, 2019**

**Committee Bill 764 - An Act Prohibiting "On-Call" Shift Scheduling**

The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc. (CRPA) is a nonprofit charitable organization. Our mission is to support the recreation and park profession and steward the future of public parks and recreational opportunities in Connecticut in order to promote active lifestyles, livable communities, and quality of life for all who call Connecticut home. CRPA represents over 700 individual professionals from municipal, nonprofit and private, park, recreation and camp organizations, as well as over 130 of the 169 municipal park and recreation departments in Connecticut.

**CRPA opposes Committee Bill 764**

Committee Bill 764 would require any person or employer engaged in the preparation and serving of food for human consumption to give an employee at least 72 hours notice of a change to their scheduled shift. If the shift is canceled within the 72 hour time frame they would be required to pay the employee half of their hourly wage.

**CRPA is concerned that this bill would apply to municipally owned and operated concession stands at our recreation facilities**, for example our little league ball fields, pools, and ice-skating rinks. Many park and recreation departments operate these concession stands to help offset the cost of maintaining these facilities and to control the cost of program fees. The concession stands are only open when the facility is open to the public. If a weather related or mechanical incident closes the facility then the concession stand would close as well. This often happens with little to no notice.

**CRPA asks the Committee to consider including municipally owned and operated concession stands in the exemptions listed in lines 18 and 19 of the proposed bill.** The current exemptions include nonprofit education, charitable or religious organizations. Additionally, we would ask that in lines 49 and 50 the language be changed to the following:

*"Employer" means an employer, as defined in section 31-71a of the general statutes, who employs not less than twenty-five employees and is not the state or any political subdivision thereof."*

If municipalities are not exempt from SB 764 it will result in increased costs and loss of revenue to our park and recreation departments which will have to increase fees to residents or close their concession stands altogether.

CRPA looks forward to working with the Committee on this issue should the need arise.

Ray Favreau, CPRP  
Legislative Committee Chair, Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc.  
Director of Parks and Recreation, Town of South Windsor