



**Written Testimony of
Kurt Westby, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 12, 2019**

Good Morning Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Senator Miner, Representative Polletta and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding **Senate Bill 5 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WORKFORCE PIPELINE AND JOB CREATION TASK FORCE**. My name is Kurt Westby and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor (DOL).

This bill seeks to establish a workforce pipeline and job creation task force to prepare the state's future workforce for well-paying manufacturing and technical jobs located in Connecticut. While DOL is committed to providing the state's jobseekers and business community with services to strengthen our workforce and the economy, we believe the intent of the bill may duplicate the charge of The Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC).

CETC is authorized under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and state statute. It provides workforce-related policy and planning guidance to the Governor and General Assembly and promotes coordination of the state's workforce-related investments, strategies, and programs. Appointed by the Governor, its members represent Connecticut businesses, employers, key state agencies, regional/ local entities, organized labor, community-based organizations and other stakeholders. The Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), which is housed in DOL, provides staff, leadership, support and technical assistance to CETC. Simply put, CETC establishes an overarching strategy to support the Governor's workforce development vision and OWC works to implement it.

In addition, CT has 5 Regional Workforce Development Boards (WDBs/WIBs) which conduct comprehensive planning, and coordinate regional workforce development policy and programs. The Boards assess regional employment and training needs and priorities, and coordinate programs that address those needs. The Boards also review regional grant proposals and plans submitted to state agencies by other organizations to assure that all regional planning is consistent with an overall statewide blueprint for workforce development. The Boards, with the Connecticut Department of Labor, other State agencies and private organizations, form a statewide partnership to achieve comprehensive workforce development in the State as guided by the Governor and CETC.

DOL would be happy to discuss with the members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee the workforce development system in the state and the different programs and training that the different entities perform and offer. Further, DOL would be happy to further discuss the most effective way to achieve the goals of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.