THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

(The House of Representatives was called to order at 12:00 o'clock p.m., Speaker Joe Aresimowicz of the 30th District in the Chair.)

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

[Gavel] Will the House please come to order. Will members, staff and guests please rise and direct your attention to the dais where Rabbit Alan Lefkowitz will lead is in prayer.

CHAPLAIN RABBI LEFKOWITZ:

Good afternoon. Living with holiness. In the Scriptures it says: "Do not be like the behavior of the land of Egypt in which you were dwelling, do not be like the behavior of the land of Canaan to which I bring you." There we are being told to follow a different and higher standard, which is not about being better than, rather it is about being
different from. We are told to carry ourselves with dignity, self-respect, self-esteem with personal pride and respect for others.

This caution refers to the evil and thoughtless practices of these nations that are diametrically opposed to ethical living in practice. We are told to live life in a way that creates among us a form of holy existence as a sacred and devout way of living, due to the positive things we are instructed to do.

A sage once explained that whenever we do a good deed, we must first think that we are doing this good deed for the sake of Heaven as the highest of good deeds is to respect our fellow human beings. We do good deeds because it was God that commanded us to do so, and we all desire to please our Creator, and when we are doing good things, we are doing them properly and respectfully.

While much is said about "individual religious expression," we are reminded to serve God, not by doing whatever we want to do because it feels good, but by bending our will to do good deeds. In this
way oh God, as we come together we can elevate ourselves and become more Godly, Godly individuals When we say, Amen.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, Rabbi. Will Representative Arnone of the 58th District please come to the dais and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ALL:

I pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible with Liberty and Justice for all.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

[Gavel] The House come back to order. Are there any announcements or introductions? Announcements or introductions? Of the 83rd District, Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself, Representative Kokoruda and Representative Linehan we would like to invite everyone to go upstairs to Room 310 to observe Water
Safety Awareness Day. There are many booths up there, there is some children books so if you would be so kind as to take this opportunity and go up and say hello to everybody we would appreciate it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Abercrombie. Any announcements or introductions. Announcements or introductions? The Chamber will stand-at-ease. Is there any business on the Clerk’s desk?

CLERK:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Communication from the Senate Minority Leader appointing Michael J. Ajello to be a member of the State Elections Enforcement Commission.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

It will be so referred.

CLERK:

Communications from the Governor at the request of Mary Florio, the Governor is hereby withdrawing her nomination to be a member of the Advisory Board of the Worker’s Compensation Commission.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

It will be ordered. Okay, both of those will be referred to the Committee on Executive and Legislative Nominations.

CLERK:

And communication from the Governor, corrected letter concerning Marissa Paslick Gillett of West Hartford as Utility Commissioner of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please refer that to the Committee on Executive and Legislative Nominations.

CLERK:

And the last piece of business is the Daily Calendar.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Chamber will stand-at-ease. The Chamber will come back to order. Representative Currey.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I move that we suspend the rules and immediately transmit House Joint Resolution 164, Calendar 535.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Any objections? Hearing no objections, so ordered. The Chamber will stand-at-ease. The Chamber will come back to order. Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 382?

CLERK:


DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Esteemed Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, Representative McCarthy Vahey.

REP. MC CArTHy VAHEY (133RD):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, it is wonderful to see you up there.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Likewise.

REP. MC CArTHy VAHEY (133RD):

Mr. Speaker move for acceptance of the Joint
Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question is acceptance of Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the Bill. Representative McCarthy Vahey you have the floor.

REP. MC CARTHY VAHEY (133RD):

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment LCO 8098. The is a Strike-All Amendment. I would ask the Clerk to please call the Amendment and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8098 which will be designated as House Amendment Schedule “A”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “A”, LCO Number 8098, offered by Representative McCarthy Vahey, Representative Zawistowski and Representative Klarides.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to
summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative McCarthy Vahey you may proceed with summarization.

REP. MC CARTHY VAHEY (133RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker this Amendment which I said is a Strike-All would allow the Town of Woodbridge to extend the, to renew for a period of not more than 15 years, the temporary notes that were issued to this town for financing of the purchase of Woodbridge Country Club and I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This will help a small town with a tithing problem. It is nothing they can actually do without State approval so it is a good Bill. I recommend passage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark
further? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? If not, I will try your minds. All those in favor please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Those nay. The aye’s have it. Motion is adopted, the Amendment is adopted. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Remark further on the Bill as Amended. If not will the Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members please take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all
members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk will please call the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 7364 as Amended by House “A”

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DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Bill as Amended is passed [Gavel]. Are there any announcements or introductions?

Representative Cummings from the 74th District.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, here with me I have former Representative Seline Noujaim, who retired from this Chamber just a couple of years ago and who was such a great mentor for me all of those years and also with us is Representative DeMello who is one of the longest service members here in the Chamber so I would appreciate if my
colleagues would give former Representative Noujaim a grand welcome [Applause].

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

    Thank you, Representative. Because Representative Noujaim was so beloved that Representative Klarides would like to be recognized. Representative Klarides, please.

REP. KLARIDES (114TH):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to rise to welcome Representative Noujaim. First I would like to than him for giving us Representative Cummings because we love her. We are happy to have her here but we always miss our family member Saline and no matter how long you are gone; you will always be family to us. Thank you. [Applause].

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

    Thank you. Representative Noujaim it is always nice to see you. It is a great pleasure. I have fond memories of my first term here sitting in that row with you, Representative Jarmoc we seemed to eat a lot of cookies and one thing I will say like I say to many retirees, you sure look happy and healthy,
so God bless you, it’s good to see you.  [Applause]

Will the Clerk please call Calendar No. 3113?

CLERK:

On Page 34, House Calendar 3113 Substitute House Bill No. 7223 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STORAGE OF A POSTOL OR REVOLVE IN A MOTOR VEHICLE. Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Chair of the Judiciary Committee, Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Questions is I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Representative Stafstrom you have the floor.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker when we were here last night we began a conversation about
tragedy, and senseless violence, and the need for this Legislature to take action in the face of such tragedy and loss of life. Mr. Speaker, we know violence continues to plague the urban areas of our State. There continues to be far too many homicides and shootings particularly in some of our larger cities and we know that from conversations with the chiefs of police of those various municipalities and from folks who live and work in those municipalities and a lot of that violence happens as a result of illegal guns ending up in the hands of the wrong people. I think it was said last night that bad guys steal guns and that in fact is the case. We know that guns end up on our streets illegally in primarily in one of two ways in this State. They are brought in from out of the State from some state that has looser gun laws than we have and unfortunately Congress has failed to take action to address that. But they also end up stolen from primarily from motor vehicles and ends up in the hands of people who should not have them. Guns are stolen frequently primarily out of our suburban
towns and used to commit violence in our cities. An enlightening report by NBC Connecticut partnering with The Truce, in February of 2018 reported and identified more than 1,000 stolen weapons in the State, many of which were later used to commit crime. The name of Adrianna Wilson may ring true and folks may remember at the age of 10 years old, the tender age of 10 years old, she was relaxing on the sofa of her couch in Hartford, Connecticut apartment when gunfire sent a barrage of bullets through the living room window. One of the rounds struck Arianna in the head severely injuring her. The shooting was carried out with a handgun reported stolen months earlier from an unlocked car in the Town of Glastonbury. We also have seen other instances as NBC as documented, these include a semiautomatic handgun that was plucked from a car in a Cheshire driveway and later used to rob the West Hartford Mall. Mr. Speaker, there is also other instance reported, countless other instances from throughout the country and here in Connecticut including an incident again in Glastonbury where a
pistol was left in the bed of a pickup truck and was later found in connection with a Hartford homicide. These instances become all too common and all too pervasive and the theft of firearms in our State and around the nation continues to grow at alarming rate. Mr. Speaker, the Bill before us is an opportunity to reverse course. The Bill before us will not prevent every single stolen vehicle in our State, it will not prevent every single homicide but it is a step at addressing at what is a growing problem of stolen guns committing, being used to commit violent acts here in Connecticut. The underlying Bill simply requires that if you take a handgun or pistol in your motor vehicle that you secure it.

Mr. Speaker, with that the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment LCO No.8067. I ask that the Amendment be called and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8067 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule “A”.
CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule A LCO No. 8067 offered by Representative Stafstrom and Representative Blumenthal.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization, is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Stafstrom you may proceed with summarization.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker the Amendment addresses the fiscal note associated with the underlying Bill and also make some other changes to the underlying Bill based on conversations that have happened over the last few days on this Bill. The underlying Amendment also removes the objection to this Bill that was originally placed by the Chief State’s Attorney and addresses some of their concerns. When the Amendment is attacked to the full Bill, what the Bill will essentially requires is that if you take a pistol or revolver in your
vehicle, you leave your vehicle unattended that the pistol or revolver be left either in a safe or the trunk of the vehicle. The Amendment also addresses the penalty associated with this Bill and provides just like many of other gun statues do that for first time offender and someone who is not likely to reoffend that the first time offense basis a sentence can be suspended if they are in violation of the Statue. With that, I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the change is adoption of House Amendment Schedule “A”. Will you remark on the Amendment? The Ranking Member, Representative Rebimbas of the 70th District. You have the floor, ma’am.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise with a few questions to the good Chairman regarding the Amendment that’s before us.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, madam.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The Amendment before us defines the word trunk as well as now if one, if it passes, would amend the underlying Bill to allow weapons to be secured in trunks but it also talks about luggage compartments of a motor vehicle.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What exactly is a luggage compartment of a motor vehicle?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom do you care to answer?

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Luggage compartment depending on the type of vehicle somebody has, it may have varying sizes trunk in a sedan maybe a little bigger, if there is a locked luggage compartment in certain vehicles that is a smaller piece to the back that would suffice under the Bill as well.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Just to clarify that a little bit more, many people at times end up purchasing, and I don’t know the exact term, but it is a container that they put above their vehicles or sometimes they attach it to the back of their vehicles which they transport luggage in. Would that be considered a luggage compartment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you.

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
And through you, Mr. Speaker.

As I read the Amendment there is no requirement that that luggage compartment actually be one that is locked. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The way I read Line 4, it says “locked main storage or luggage compartment”, I would read the word locked meant to apply to both the main storage or the luggage compartment. So yeah, the luggage compartment would need to be locked.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I think that is why we do end up having these dialogues on the floor of the House is to clarify because the worked locked
certainly appears before the main storage and is questionable or not it would also then extend to the luggage compartment of a motor vehicle in that regard. Moving forward, Mr. Speaker if I can draw the Chairman’s attention to the Amendment lines 11 to 13. It talks about the type of weapons that this would apply pistols and revolvers. Are those the only weapons that this would apply to, this requirement of storage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So through you, Mr. Speaker.

Then are all other types of weapons, long-barrel weapons and that could certainly be assault
rifles or regular hunting rifles would they then be excluded from this requirement?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Those, something that is not defined as a pistol or revolver is not covered by the legislation contemplated before us.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again for clarity is then rifle and long-barrel assault weapons excluded from the definition of the Amendment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe I answered the question. My understanding is that those are not defined on our Statue as a pistol or revolver. This Amendment and the underlying Bill applies only to pistols and revolvers.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is the reason or the purpose that we’re picking and choosing only pistols or revolvers and excluding high capacity long-barrel assault weapons or rifles?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Primarily two reasons. One I believe some of those weapons are already covered under existing
transport statutes and second, certainly the issue we’re trying to address here is the smash and grab of a pistol or revolver that is eventually used in the commission of a crime so those are the types of weapons that primarily we see stolen and ending up committing those crimes we’re trying to address that specific issue with this Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And I appreciate the good Chairman’s highlights of the transportation statute, aren’t pistols and revolvers already covered by that same statute?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe is some respects for transport
purposes they are.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That was my believe as well. I believe that the Chairman had also indicated smash and grab. I certainly don’t want to assume he means, and he can correct me if I’m wrong, are we talking about smashing a vehicle window and grabbing a weapon?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker that is precisely the situation this Bill is intended to get at is the instance where someone walks away from their vehicle, walks into a store for example and leaves the pistol or revolver sitting on the passenger seat, or in the cup holder of their car, or laying on the floor mat and somebody walks by and smashes
the window and is off with that pistol or revolver likely never to be seen again. Those are the types of incidents we are trying to prevent by the mandates in this Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker is there anything in the Amendment that would prevent someone for smashing and grabbing a rifle and using it in a commission of a crime?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

These is nothing in the Amendment but my understanding is under existing law the person who smashed and grabbed that rifle would be guilty of a Class D felony with a mandatory minimum sentence of two years.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Wouldn’t that be the case also for the revolver and the pistol and yet we’re highlighting specifically and excluding a rifle.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

As I indicated earlier this Bill is designed at getting at pistols and revolvers. It is my understanding that certain types of rifles must be stored in the trunk already under existing law.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are there
circumstances allowable by law that a rifle would be unloaded and allowed in a secured safe within the compartment of the vehicle or unsecured?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I apologize if the Representative could rephrase the question, I’m not sure I caught the tail end of her question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please rephrase, Representative.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And maybe what we probably should do for the benefit of the individuals who haven’t had an opportunity to look at the transportation statute regarding this, the good Chairman could highlight for us what the transportation laws are that have been referenced regarding this Amendment when it comes to rifles and pistols, etc. and revolvers.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I did have occasion to take a brief look at that statute but I will confess I’m certainly not an expert on the ins and outs of it but I would direct anyone who is interested to Section 53-202f of our General Statutes and I can certainly read the requirement there.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BUTLER (72ND):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the good Chairman’s honesty in that regard. I guess I’m just trying to get to the point of it we have a transportation statute that actually covers all weapons and now we’re taking steps to amend and add an additional storage requirement that only addresses revolvers and pistols this is highly concerning to me that we’re gonna have a conflict in
laws between different types of weapons all of which are weapons that still arguably could be subject to this smash and grab that we are attempting to address so that is concerning to me, Mr. Speaker and it is concerning to me for those individuals, again, that may not know we will now be enacting a conflicting law in that regard.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Moving on to a different section of the Amendment, when we talk about the Court may order suspension of prosecution if the court finds in certain circumstances that the person is not likely to offend, this is a first offence, etc. Regarding the suspension what are the suspension options that the court has?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The provision that the Ranking Member highlights is a provision that originally comes out of Section 29-33 of our General
Statutes with respects to the penalty for unlawful sale, delivery or transfer of a pistol or revolver. It is also language that we’ve used in other gun legislation most recently the ghost-gun Bill that this Chamber passed last night, and the import of it is to allow, in those instances where someone is charged with a first offense and the court makes a finding that the person is not likely to offend again, they can suspend prosecution and by suspend prosecution what is meant is basically say we are not gonna prosecute, we are not gonna try you for this crime today in May of 2019. What we’re gonna do is we’re gonna wait a year, we will hold the Statue of Limitations, we’re going to waive the right for a speedy trial and assuming there is no future incidents over the next six months, year, 18 months at the end of that period of time the charges against you will be non-honored or dismissed. It is something that happens quite frequently in our courts for particularly nonviolent first time offenders.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And under the Amendment regarding the suspension of time, is there a maximum amount of time that any judge can order? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I’m looking for the exact line in reference, I believe in Line 60 it specifies that the maximum suspension is two years. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So is it my understanding that if a judge were to order a suspension of two years and I believe the language in here is essentially that they are under probation, any violation of the conditions of the
probation are essentially any violations that the court may find afterwards that person could essentially be facing the original charges by which this suspension was applied, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The only thing I might quibble with is I’m not sure about after. I think if the judge ordered a period of suspended sentence of two years if during that two year time period someone was charged with a subsequent offense they could be tried for both the initial offense of failure to properly store the pistol or revolver as well as whatever subsequent offense there is. This is similar to what we do with our AR Programs or drug education programs or any of the other programs that we have in our court system to toll to allow folks an opportunity to show that they are not likely to reoffend.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

During the period of time of suspension assuming that the individual who is being suspended was a law abiding gunowner, what happens to their ability to possess a weapon during that period of probation?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I believe that would be up to the court and Court Support Services.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I don’t know if that is exactly correct. You’re under probation for
a charge having to do with a firearm. What are the consequences if the Chairman knows whether in a court of law or possibly is there any referral to a firearms board as a result of this action?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I’m unclear as I said. It appears to me in the language that the court has the discretion to impose conditions of suspension.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is very concerning to me because if we have an individual who requires the use of a firearm during the period of time for their livelihood as a job they potentially could be facing the ability of being unemployed. Moreover Mr. Speaker, it is also
concerning to me that if we don’t have clarity on this, if you have an individual who may have it for sport purposes and competition they could get up to two years once again be excluded by something. Also, Mr. Speaker if someone has a gun because of protection purposes once again they have been taken away that right in order to have them and I guess the concerning part is not having clarity on something along those lines. I don’t know how we could support an amendment with language without knowing the exact consequences or unintended consequences that it may have on any given individual.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

During the time of the probation essentially the individual could violate probation on a matter that has nothing to do with the original change of weapons, it that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
This is correct, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

And assuming that the individual decides to take the period of suspension and again that is up to a judge and I believe as indicated it say a period of time not to exceed two years, it could certainly be two days or it could be all the way up to two years, but if the person were to accept whatever period of time being recommended by the court, it is my understanding that then the individual has to apply for the dismissal. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Either, Mr. Speaker through you.

The person has to apply or upon receipt of a report submitted by Court Services the person has satisfactorily completed the program the court may
in its own motion made a finding of such satisfactory completion and dismiss the charges which as I indicated earlier I believe is fairly standard procedure with respect to most of our AR Programs and certainly existing law with respect to dismissal of certain other suspended sentences when things are not prosecuted under existing violations.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So, through you, Mr. Speaker.

Then to confirm the information my understanding then is the individual has the ability to then do a motion to apply for dismissal at which time then it will be up to the court to decide one way or another if the person is obviously eligible to have the matter dismissed or not and then the wording of “that the court may upon its own motion” so may again is pretty discretionary term, so if the court decides that they are not going to take action
on that, and yet two years have gone by and the individual gets stopped by law enforcement or gets rearrested on something else, could that individual still be found to be under probation and violating probation if the individual in fact did not take it upon themselves to file a motion.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I do not believe so, Mr. Speaker. I think at that point the period of suspended prosecution has run.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But no action has taken so there has been no final judgement from a court of law indicating that the person is actually eligible or complied with the probation so how could that be?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

In my limited, admittedly limited experience of representing clients in these types of matters in criminal court, like I said, one the period of suspension has run that is, as part of the initial condition of probation, you’ve only agreed to a tolling of the statute of limitations and a tolling of the right to a speedy trial for that particular period of time and so even if the case has not been dismissed by operation of the court’s filing system there would be constitutional issues with prosecuting somebody for the previous offense or subsequent offense where the statute of limitations has run based on the initial tolling.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I guess I would tend to agree with the good Chairman if the only factors before was a period of time, but it is actually not because there are other conditions that this Amendment indicates that the court could apply, conditions during that probation. So there still has to be an actual finding by the court whether by a motion of the individual or by the court themselves that the conditions have all been fulfilled but not just a matter of time. So again, that is concerning. So Mr. Speaker I’ve raised my points regarding the Amendment and I think what I certainly will do is if the Amendment is successful then I will reserve my comments for the underlying Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Rebimbas. Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Will you remark further? From the 8th District, home of a fine golf course at least, Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few questions to the
proponent of the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. And as quick as I can having received this Amendment kind of reviewing some of the language in terms of the storage component, and you know, when I drive my, I have I believe three local rod and gun clubs, fishing and hunting and in the parking lot there is very little cars, automobiles, they are mostly pickup trucks and I’m trying to see how the pickup truck component works out with this because it can’t be in the passenger area of the pickup truck and there is very limited space in the pickup truck. Now I have in my truck, I know I have multiple storage areas, they are not lockable would they be, and they are concealed but not lockable, would those areas in my truck, the glovebox, storage laptop storage and other areas in the truck, would they be considered to be adequate storage in a passenger area of the pickup truck?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom, I do believe you answered this before, but if you care to answer it.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker the answer is no.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

I do apologize for missing a dialogue between the good Ranking Member and the Chair on that, I was actually researching how you could actually store it so, doing my homework and so sorry to be redundant. So if you do not, how would that be addressed?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If I have an open body pickup truck and an area that is the passenger area of a vehicle how would the pickup truck be addressed through this legislation?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One the Amendment is
combined with the underlying Bill it becomes clear, I believe, that in that instance what one would have to do is purchase a safe and store the pistol or revolver in a safe within the passenger component of the vehicle.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I’m secure, I’m taking lock because I read the language in the back, when you had said locked, main storage areas, a utility body tool compartment in the back of the pickup truck mounted in the back of the pickup truck, that would have to be put in the locked position if you were going to store your pistol or revolver in that component in the back of the bed if you have a tool compartment, that would have to be in the locked position of the body of that once you walk away from that truck?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

As indicated Lines 3-5 of the Bill make it clear that it has to be in locked trunk which is defined as a “locked main storage or luggage compartment of a motor vehicle that is not accessible from the passenger component.”

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the good Chair for his answers. I have reservations on this language through the dialogue that happened but I was able to hear between the good Chair and the Ranking Member and I do have concerns, you know, I think that those that are, do have a pistol on them and do respect the buildings that they go in to, that have do not allow firearms and or knives as does this building here, that they would like to put that in their vehicle and not have to be worried
about somebody violating them, breaking a crime and breaking into their vehicle and taking a possession of theirs out of it and then being penalized for that, someone else committing a crime. I would think that may opt if they did not have a safe or did not have a place to store it legally that they would carry it in places that they would typically not carry and so we may be actually creating a concern for those areas. So, I’ll listen to the further dialogue on this and I thank you, Mr. Speaker for the time and the good Gentleman’s answers. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Ackert.

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker before I forget, I would request that when the vote be taken on this Amendment it be taken by roll.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is on a Roll Call Vote. All those in favor or roll call vote,
please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The requisite 20 percent has been met, when the vote is taken it will be taken by roll. Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Will you remark further? From the 37th District, Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I have a couple of questions on the Amendment if I may?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Of course, please proceed.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. I’m looking at the Amendment and the individuals who are now not covered by this Bill and in lines 40 through 43, “being kept or stored in accordance with such issuing or possessing agency department, municipality, organization, force or entity or persons policy concerning safe keeping or
storage of a pistol or a revolver in a motor vehicle’’ so if I am understanding this correctly this would not only apply to the service weapons of these individuals but also to any persona weapons they may chose to have? Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As long as those weapons are stored in accordance with their employer’s requirement pursuant to their job function then that is correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

And I obviously do not know the details of all the employers requirements but should the employer be silent on the question of that safe storage of either the service weapon or the personal weapon, would they then be immune from prosecution under
this Amendment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I suppose in that instance they could be although I suspect that hypothetical is doubtful. I think most of the agencies have very particular requirements of how weapons are stored.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you and I appreciate the explanation but I can certainly understand that they may in fact have very specific requirements regarding the storage of those service weapons, but would it be likely that one of these would say when you are off duty and you have a personal weapon this is how you have to store it. I’m just curious as to whether or not the proponent of the Amendment is aware of any
such regulations regarding the storage of personal weapons by employers?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with the ins and out of the storage requirements of each of the agencies listed in this Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

So it is in fact possible that these individuals could be complying with their employers regulations regarding safe storage of their service weapons but because of the way this Amendment is drafted would then not be covered for safe storage of their personal weapons. Have I interpreted this correctly?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker I suppose that if one of these individuals, a local police officer was not prohibited from leaving a personal weapon on the passenger seat of his car, then yes, that could be correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So approximately how many individuals does this Amendment cover?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe it covers most individuals who are
required to carry a firearm either by Federal, State or local government as part of their job function.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. And I do understand that. I was actually looking for a number if the good proponent of the Amendment is aware.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I don’t have that number.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you. Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

So given the number of police, military, state troopers, etc. we could be looking at in excess of certainly tens of thousands of individuals, would that be correct?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker I can’t speculate on that. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the proponent of the Amendment for his elucidation and I will listen to the rest of the debate with interest. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you very much, Representative Cheeseman. Will you remark further on the Amendment? From the 83rd District, Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker through you.

To the proponent of the Bill, just a couple of quick questions.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, ma’am.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the good Chair of Judiciary, question is, is a glovebox considered a closed area for them to put a gun in?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

My apologies, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

It is not.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, no apologies necessary.

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

And through you.

Could you explain what the conversation was on the Judiciary Committee please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.
REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker there was and has continued to be some concern about adding in a component where someone would be in compliance if they left a pistol or revolver in the glovebox. Certainly police officers had some justifiable concern on that because most folks obviously would leave their license and registration in the glovebox so if you are also leaving a pistol or revolver in there during a traffic stop it could create a potentially risky situation for the office. Take for example the instance where someone goes to one store, they take their pistol or revolver, they stick it in the glovebox, they lock it in there, they try to leave to go to the next store, they are pulled over for speeding on the way. License and registration and the pistol or revolver is sitting there in the glovebox on top of the license and registration and, I believe from my conversations with certain law enforcement professionals that they do not want to encourage that type of behavior in our State.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. ABERCROMBIE (83RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

That makes sense. Thank you to the good Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? From the 47th District, Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few questions for the proponent, if I may?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Of course, please proceed.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you. Looking at the Amendment I wonder what is meant or what is the purpose of having a trunk in the Bill that is inaccessible from the passenger compartment?

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now the good proponent of the Bill indicated when asked by Representative Rebimbas about a luggage compartment and he was asked about a luggage compartment that was attached to the vehicle that did not have a lock on it. And I’m wondering if a luggage compartment that is attached to the vehicle is considered an appropriate place for a firearm? Well let me just ask again just to refresh my recollection, is such a luggage compartment an adequate place to store a firearm?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

I believe it has been answered but if Representative Stafstrom will care to respond please do.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, my read of the language is that if the luggage compartment is locked and inaccessible from the passenger component than that would be an
acceptable place to store your pistol or revolver.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

And has there been any research about any luggage compartments that are made of anything but plastic? My understanding is that, my experience is that almost all of those luggage compartments are made of some type of plastic. Before this Amendment was created was there any research as to whether or not there were any secure luggage compartments on the market that perhaps are made out of some type of metal?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I don’t know. I am not an expert on types of luggage compartments but certainly if the good Representative would like to remove the ability to
store a pistol or revolver in a plastic luggage compartment I am more than happy to make that change.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I also see that one of the places that is not permitted for use to store a firearm is a toolbox or utility box attached to the bed of a pickup truck. Do I read that correctly?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That’s correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if I read this
Amendment correctly one is permitted to store a firearm in a plastic luggage compartment that is attached to perhaps the roof of a vehicle but is prohibited from storing it in what is very likely a steel or aluminum toolbox that is securely attacked to the bed of a pickup truck. Do I read that correctly?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated I believe that is correct. If after we adopt this Amendment if the good question would like us to change that I am more than happy to prohibit somebody from keeping a pistol or revolver in a plastic luggage compartment if he so wishes.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now in either of those
instances, whether the person that is trying to securely store their firearm is going to store it in an external plastic luggage compartment or an external steel toolbox in each instance the person would need to exit the vehicle with firearm in hand, open the compartment, put the firearm into the compartment, then close the compartment and lock it. Does the proponent of the Bill know any other way to get a firearm into an external compartment than I’ve just described?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

So I am envisioning a person who is lawfully carrying a firearm who wants to go perhaps to the post office or to pick-up her child at school, pulling into the parking lot, pulling out her
firearm in the parking lot, opening up this compartment with bystanders all around her, firearm in hand, opening the compartment, setting her firearm into the compartment, closing it and locking it. That to me does not seem like a safe or appropriate way to store a firearm when going to perhaps to the post office to picking up a child. I would the proponent about the definition of pistol and revolver under State statute is any firearm with a certain barrel length. Now we have an assault weapons ban or assault weapons law in this State and I would wonder how this Amendment and the rules under this Amendment would comport with the transport rules for assault weapons. So for example, if an Olympic competitive shooter had an Olympic target pistol which in this State is considered an assault weapon how would that person transport and store that Olympic target pistol? Would they follow the rules under this statue, under this Amendment or would they follow the rules under the assault weapons statue?

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

They would follow the rules for transport of the Transport Statue and if they left their vehicle unattended if the vehicle was defined as a pistol or revolver which under the hypothetical I’m not sure if it would or would not, then it would need to be locked in a safe or the trunk. But my understanding is under the assault rifle transport statue those types of weapons are supposed to be left in the trunk anyway, so I am not sure if would make a whole heck of a lot of difference in that instance.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So do I understand the proponent to mean that there is no conflict whatsoever between those two statutes with regard to the transfer, the transport and storage of a pistol
that is also consider an assault weapon in this State?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker that is in fact part of the rationale of the Amendment before us as I understand it that weapon could be properly transported and if the Amendment is adopted onto the Bill, could properly be left unattended in the trunk of a vehicle.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Now I heard the good proponent indicate that a glovebox would not be an appropriate location to store a firearm and gave the scenario that was related to him by the police with regard to somebody reaching into the glovebox and for their registration and there being a firearm
there. So is there some prohibition in this Amendment that would prevent somebody from installing a safe, a locked safe into the glovebox?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Madam Speaker there is no probation in the proposed Bill for that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So what I’m hearing is that you can have a metal box inside your glovebox and as long as there is a lock on it, then that would be a safe and appropriate place to store a firearm under this Amendment?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That is correct.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So I would ask the proponent what the difference is between having a separate box inside the glovebox and having a mental glovebox with a secure lock on the outside and how would one be more secure that the other?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

The issue is not necessarily one of security but more of trying to envision situations to minimize the risk that the pistol or revolver is stored along with someone’s license and registration. So in the hypothetical the Representative advances presumably if the pistol or revolver is placed in the safe it is placed inside the glovebox it seems more likely than not that the
license or registration will be on top of the safe and therefore accessible separately from the pistol or revolver in the event that someone is pulled over by a police officer during a traffic stop.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So is there any requirement that the box, that the safe in the glovebox has room around it for other things such as a registration or is there some reason why somebody couldn’t securely lock up their firearm in a box inside the glovebox and also in that safe also have their license and registration?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

No, there’s nothing in this Amendment on that. As I said certainly we are not going to catch every
instance but what we didn’t want was to put in the Amendment a requirement that simply locked the pistol alone in the glovebox would be enough because we thought that would incentivize or encourage folks to keep the pistol or revolve in the same place that most folks keep their license and most folks keep their registration and insurance documentation.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just want to go back for a moment to the toolbox or utility box attached to the bed of a pickup truck. Now if those boxes are made of some type of secure metal and have a lock on them, may I ask the proponent what is the rationale from prohibiting somebody from using one of those to secure their firearm?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Madam Speaker.

That was the way we decided to draft this Amendment yesterday. I think there certainly could be a case to be made for that, but as currently drafted that is prohibited.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I apologize but I didn’t hear any rationale and I was wondering if the proponent could give me a reason why such a box secure as it may be and intended to be a secure box would be prohibited when a perhaps a flimsy luggage compartment that may or may not be as secure would be an appropriate place. I was wondering if there was any type of rationale or reason why that decision was made for this Amendment?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Madam Speaker.

As I indicated that was the way this was drafted in the discussions yesterday. This is the first I am hearing of that suggestion from the questioner.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to point a little bit to Section (b) of the Amendment. Section (b) has a long list which in fact is longer than the Bill itself of people who will be exempt from the requirements of the safe-storage in cars and I believe I heard the good Representative say that the reason why this list was created was to avoid a fiscal note. Is that correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Madam Speaker, not entirely. Certainly the
Amendment was added which does in fact remove the fiscal note on this Bill but I think the other rationale was in conversations with the States Attorney’s Office and with law enforcement personnel and the like over the last few days on this Bill it became clear that most of these departments have their own requirements for someone storing a weapon within a vehicle. These are trained law enforcement professionals by-in-large and we thought it was safe to assume that those agencies would police themselves with respect to requiring safe storage by their personnel.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Has, is there any research or do we have any knowledge of any of the storage requirements of any of the departments that are listed on this exemption?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):
REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I don’t have that at my fingertips.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So am I correct to interpret that meaning that although there was an assumption that since the people are exempted under this Amendment are professionals and would have some type of requirements with regard to safe storage in cars? There was no effort to find any such requirements and if there was such an effort none was found.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

As I indicated my understanding from
discussions certainly with the Chief States Attorney’s Office is that there various departments do have requirements, I believe certainly the State Police have certain requirements in the training, I believe that Post and others have storage requirements and certainly provide training to folks in conjunction with their job.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So I would ask if the off-duty police officer is, if an off-duty State Police Officer that is in his or her personal vehicle carrying his or her personal firearm, is subject to the exemption in Section(b).

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker I’ve been informed that actually a personal weapon
becomes a service weapon when, if a police personnel, if police personnel are qualified, so in fact that personal weapon would be considered a service weapon pursuant to the storage requirements from that law enforcement agency and certainly I believe that if a State Police Officer in his own vehicle left his service or personal weapon on the passenger seat or in the cupholder of his car and the window was smashed and it was stolen, there would be repercussions for that State Police Officer as a result of that.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So do I interpret that answer to mean that if a State Police Officer, personally owns a dozen firearms and also has his or her service firearm that every single one of those firearms becomes a service firearm?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I am relying on the information I have received from the Office of the Chief States Attorney but that is my understanding.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Well, okay thank you, Madam Speaker. So the idea is that a person listed in Section(b) of the Amendment because of their training they would have the ability to somehow secure their firearm in a vehicle without a safe because they are trained to do so, is that the idea?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

It is not so much that they are trained to do so but I believe they are less likely to be the careless person to leave the gun in an unsecure
location in the vehicle.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Well, I would ask what is the secure location in the vehicle if they are exempt from the safe requirement?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Presumably in the trunk of the vehicle.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So the presumption in creating the exceptions in Section(b) of the Amendment was that each time a police officer, or a constable, or anybody who was certified by, under Post standards had their own personal firearm and
went place to place because of their training they
would put their firearm into the trunk of the
vehicle and that that justifies the exception for
this long list of people?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Madam Speaker either that or they would not
leave their vehicle unattended with a firearm left
inside the passenger compartment.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would ask how does
somebody go to a post office or to a school to pick
up their children without leaving, if they are
armed, without leaving a firearm somewhere in the
vehicle?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

It is my experience that most law enforcement, in fact, carry some sort of service weapon or backup weapon with them certainly when they enter into certain buildings and the like so there is no requirement that they not carry the weapon, they just could not leave it unattended in the vehicle unless there was some sort of storage of that weapon pursuant to the guidelines from their various departments.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Was it not factored into this Amendment that police officers are not exempt from the prohibition on carrying firearms in schools in this State?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.
REP. STAIFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker I don’t understand the question.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

I’m trying to give a little bit of leeway.
Representative Dubitsky do you want to rephrase that and make sure it’s tying up into this Amendment please.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

The good proponent just indicated that it is his experience that police will typically carry their firearms into places, my examples were a post office and a school. Police Officers in this State are prohibited by law from carrying firearms in schools unless they are on office police business. So if a police officer goes to a school to pick up his or her child, that police officer is prohibited by law from carrying any firearm, whether it is a service firearm, a personal firearm or anything into that school, so that police officer is required under this Bill to keep their firearm somewhere secure in a car because how else are they gonna do
it. They are carrying a gun, they’ve got to go their kid at schools, they can’t bring their gun into the school, so they’ve got to leave the gun somewhere. So my question is there is a list of people who are exempt from the safe storage of firearms in vehicles, so was it not considered when developing this list that police officers, just like every other person, cannot carry a firearm into a school?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, if that is in fact the state of the law, that remains unchanged by this. The only thing that the Amendment makes clear, I believe, is that when that officer leaves a service weapon or a personal weapon unattended that it needs to be secured pursuant to whatever standard there are from this or her employer.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that when developing this list of exemptions there was any research done about firearms stolen from vehicles of law enforcement officers?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not sure I can quite answer that question. Certainly this list of exemptions, part of it was taken from existing law with respect to our assault weapon exemptions which I did not develop or draft and certainly relied upon guidance from the Legislative Commissioner’s Office in developing this list, so I can’t answer what they looked at or what they didn’t look at.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.
REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if we don’t know how many firearms have been stolen from police vehicles do we know how many firearms have been stolen from non-police vehicles?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I don’t have those exact figures primarily because not every stolen vehicle is reported despite the requirements of GSL. I don’t also have that date because not every agency reported it but we do have both testimony from chiefs of police as well as anecdotal data that in fact firearms are frequently stolen from vehicles and in fact as I cited in my opening there has been extensive reporting on this by both NBC Connecticut as well as The Truce which is a nonpartisan organization looking at issues of gun violence in America and they have cited a recent Harvard and Northeastern University study that found between
300,000 and 600,00 guns are stolen in the United States every single year which means almost one a minute. And in fact in certain urban areas it has been documented for example in Atlanta that 70 percent of the guns stolen in the City of Atlanta are stolen from motor vehicles. S

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize the example that the good proponent recited earlier, the vehicle was not actually not even locked. Is there any data in the good proponent’s studies as to how many of those firearms were locked up, how many of the cars were locked and if the firearm was actually hidden in someway?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
No, my expectation is that most folks leave a firearm insight in an unlocked vehicle that is subsequently stolen don’t normally report that.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask if there was any data on that or if that is just an assumption?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Do you care to respond to that Representative Stafstrom?

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

As I indicated I think it is sort of common sense.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So we are assuming that if somebody has their
firearm stolen from an unlocked vehicle they won’t report it and if they have their firearm stolen from a locked vehicle they do report it. In those reports that the good proponent just cited is there any breakdown as to how many of those vehicles were law enforcement vehicles and how many were not?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, no.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So for all we know half of them or more, 90 percent of them could have been from cop cars?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom, I think you kinda answered this question but if you would care to keep going, I’ll give you that.
REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker I don’t have the data but I suspect that 90 percent of the guns stolen in America are not stolen out of cop cars.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was specifically talking about those that were stolen from vehicles. We have no indication as to how many of them were stolen out of vehicles that would be exempt under Section(b) of this Amendment and how many of them would not be exempt. So essentially what we are doing is creating an exemption without any idea of how many firearms that are being stolen from vehicles would be covered by this exemption. Mr. Speaker, we – perhaps the Members of this Chamber have heard the name Kate Steinle. Kate Steinle was a woman in California who was killed by an illegal alien who stole a firearm from a police vehicle. So it was a horrific shooting, it was a horrific
example of government policies gone wrong and it also exemplifies that the people who are on this exemption in Section(b) are just people just like everybody else. They are no smarter, they are no better and they shouldn’t have more rights than anybody else. If that situation happened in this State, that law enforcement officer would also be exempt. He would be able to just to exactly what the law enforcement officer in California did, leave his firearm somehow unsecured in his vehicle. What we are doing here is Section(b) is we are creating again a completely separate class of people. We are saying if you work for the government, you’re exempt. If you work in the private sector, you’re subject to our laws. We do that over, and over and over in this State and it always comes back to bite us. I just don’t see any legal, ethical, moral, practical justification for saying that if you work for the government you don’t have to comply with the safe storage law. If it’s good policy for one it’s good policy for all. I believe that the only reason that this exemption is here is to avoid an enormous
fiscal note because the proponents of this Bill and
the drafters of this Bill recognize that it is
expensive to do what this Bill requires people to
do. It is not practical. If anybody has gone on
the internet and looked at the mechanisms and the
storage containers that they have for firearms in
cars, they are not very good. They’re expensive,
they are very hard to conceal, they are hard to
secure and they make it very, very difficult for a
law abiding citizen or a police officer to lock up
their firearm without exiting the vehicle, with a
firearm in hand, putting it in a place that
everybody can see and then leaving their vehicle for
an extended period of time where everybody knows,
hey there’s a gun in that box, all we got to do is
get in there somehow or we just steal the box. I
have a constituent who read the underlying Bill
without all these exceptions and he told me that the
only time he every had his car broken into and the
only time he ever had a firearm stolen was when we
secured his firearm in a locked safe in the car and
somebody just smashed into the car, ripped the box
right out and left. I don’t see how that makes it any safer than hiding it somewhere such as the glovebox. This Bill and this Amendment to this Bill does not make the transportation and storage of firearms in vehicles any safer and especially if we agree that it is a good idea to have some kind of locked box in a vehicle to store firearms. Then why in the world would we exempt literally thousands of people from that requirement if it is good policy, it’s good policy. Exempting this whole list of people who we know have a history or we can at least point to certain situations where they have had firearms stolen from their vehicles, why in the world would we exempt all those people from this requirement? So, Mr. Speaker, there are any number of problems with this Amendment. I think that whether the Amendment passes or not, I’ll have further to say on the underlying Bill or whatever Bill we are then discussing but because of the unanswered questions and because of the problems that have been created by this Amendment, I can’t support it. Thank you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Dubitsky. Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Remark further? Representative Zullo of the 99th District. You have the floor, sir.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just two questions, very quickly to follow up for the proponent if I may?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Of course, please proceed.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If you can, to the proponent, could you explain what fully enclosed means? I don’t mean to sound caviler but I want to make sure there is a clear understanding of what fully enclosed entails.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
Mr. Speaker, the idea of fully enclosed would mean the trunk of a sedan type of vehicle, it would not include sort of the hatchback or rear storage compartment of an SUV. The idea of fully enclosed being it closes fully from the passenger compartment of the vehicle.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

And again to the proponent, does that mean it would not be accessible at all in any way from the backseat. I envision fully enclosed to mean that if you envision a box that has, you know, if you envision a box you can’t enter it in anyway possible. It was eluded to earlier that a lot of sedans have access, little access entries into the trunk, does that not make it fully enclosed?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Mr. Speaker, I believe I answered the question previously so I don’t want to misstate what I said before and mess up the legislative intent on this so, I’ll try to state it exactly. I think what I said before certainly an instance where the seats folded fully down and someone could enter into the trunk then that likely would not be fully enclosed but certainly if it’s just a, you know, reach a hand through or something like that, then that would be fully enclosed as long as somebody couldn’t access into the trunk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

And again to the proponent, so if I have relatively long arms and I can reach into that little entry way and grab something that is in the trunk does that mean it is fully enclosed because, you know, I have a good friend he is six foot seven, he’s got gigantic arms, he could easily reach into my trunk. I’ve actually locked my keys in my trunk
and he’s grabbed them out of it. So again to the proponent do you think that entryway makes it actually fully enclosed?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I believe that is an issue of fact for a court to find but in my estimation under the example, the questioner just gave, it could still be considered fully enclosed.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

I thank the proponent for his explanation. Again my objective was not to muddy the legislative intent here but I think it does bring up a fair point. Again if somebody could easily reach in and grab anything in that trunk that is within that person’s arm’s length, is it fully enclosed and granted you could leave it up to the courts to
decide as an issue of fact but I think we have the obligation right now to clear that up. We are a sitting body, we can change that wording as we stand right here, why don’t we clear it up right now? Again I thank the proponent for is clarification and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

    Thank you, Representative Zullo. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Amendment? From the 22nd District Representative Petit.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of questions. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

    Please proceed.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

    This concerns the issue of delaying prosecution, some basic questions so I apologize to the Chairman if these are questions that first year law students know. Would, if someone violates the probationary period, would someone automatically
lose their permit or is that completely within the jurisdiction of the judge in that case?

Through you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I believe that is the jurisdiction of the judge and also the firearm examining board.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Petit.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During this period of holding prosecution, is there active monitoring or is it completely passive only if something comes to the attention of the court would the prosecution be continued?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
My experience is the later scenario.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Petit.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

Thank you and finally the, in the avoidance of prosecution I think Lines 58-60, “such persons shall appear in court and be released to the custody of the Court Support Service Division for such period not exceeding two years.” So I assume that means then depending on the specific circumstances the judge can vary that time period?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That’s correct, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Petit.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

And finally I think this is the last one, starting with Line 44, “ordering the suspension of prosecution.” Line 47 says, “they have not
previously been convicted of a violation in this section, and has not previously had a prosecution under”, if someone has been convicted of multiple other crimes but not related to this specific incidence are they still eligible for delay in prosecution?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, they could be eligible for delay in prosecution but certainly that would be up to the court. I suspect in an instance where somebody had previously been convicted of other firearm violations it might be quite likely that the judge would not execute their discretion to allow to suspend the prosecution.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Petit.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

Thank you to the good Chairman and finally, on Lines, sorry 65, “he or she may apply for dismissal
of the charges” so does it imply that the charges won’t be dismissed, does the court actively go out and try to search out that person to reappear or does the person have to actively make that application to be able to have this completely expunged from their record?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, the court can dismiss their own motion pursuant to Line 72 of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Petit.

REP. PETIT (22ND):

Thank you, that’s all I have. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

You’re welcome, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? From the 108th District, Representative Smith.
REP. SMITH (108TH):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Nice to see you, sir. I’ve heard most of the dialogue but I’ve been in and out of the Chamber so I’ll apologize in advance if some of the question have been asked and answered, it is not my intent to delay the proceedings or harass the good Chair of the Judiciary Committee who has always been more than kind in answering questions. But I do have a few that I would like to address now.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

So, I’m reading the Amendment and it’s always difficult to try to piece the Amendment to the actual Bill and make it all make sense but as I’m looking at the language, it has to be locked in a trunk, then there is language in the Amendment that says that language doesn’t apply if you have a
hatchback or an SUV type of vehicle. So I’m thinkin about that because the car I drive is a hatchback, nice sports car but it doesn’t really have a trunk and my wife’s car is actually an SUV but doesn’t have a trunk. I can see in her vehicle where you would be able to get some type of safe and lock it in there. In my particular vehicle I don’t see how that would work so I’m wondering in my question to you, Mr. Speaker is if there is no trunk and it doesn’t apply to hatchbacks or SUVs where does one store the weapon?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I do appreciate the good Representative’s question cause I think this touches on an area that was not covered yet and that was specifically what constitutes a safe and under the Bill certainly any type of safe that one buys could qualify if the Representative were to go onto Amazon or into a sporting goods store or the like
you can actually find safes that just store pistols or revolvers that are not much bigger than this notebook. So that is the type of safe that I believe most people would purchase in order to be in compliance with the requirements of this Bill if they do not have a trunk to their vehicle.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

I appreciate the response. So as I understand it then, you cannot be compliant because you do not have a trunk if you simply go out and buy a safe, put the weapon within the safe, I guess not within reach of you or a passenger, in that situation you would be in compliance of this particular Amendment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is that correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
When the Amendment is put on to the underlying Bill that will be the effect of the Bill. The only thing I would say is there in fact is not a requirement that the safe be out of the reach of the passenger or the driver simply that when the vehicle is unattended, when somebody walks away from the vehicle, that the pistol or revolver be placed in that safe at that time.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Just one further question along these lines. So if I, in my situation, with a small little sports car without a trunk, if I were to purchase a safe and leave the safe locked and put the weapon inside the safe on the front passengers seat, leave the vehicle so it could be seen would that be compliant or do I still have to try to hide it in some way?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.
REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, under the pure language of the statute that would be compliant.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

And lastly, I know we talked yesterday when we were dealing with some of the gun legislation that we passed with similar language about the suspension of prosecution and one of the questions I asked yesterday was whether a person would be AR eligible under yesterday’s Bill so my question today is similar, would somebody be AR eligible under this Bill?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, they would although I’m not sure they would necessarily have to burn their AR if it was a first time offense and they may be eligible
for suspended prosecution without burning their AR eligibility.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

I thank the gentleman for his time this afternoon and look forward to continued discussion. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Smith. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Fishbein from the 90th.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon to you.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

If I may, some questions for the proponent?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Absolutely, please proceed.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):
Thank you. Looking at the, still on Amendment, I think.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

You are correct, so please keep your comments to the Amendment.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

I will try to do that, yes. I am looking at line 12 and it mentions any pistol or revolver so I guess readily assume that we are talking perhaps in the singular?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, not necessarily.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But it could be the case under this language that we are talking about a singular firearm?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Any pistol or revolver issued so that could be if there is only one pistol or revolver issued then it’s one. If it’s two, it’s two. If it’s three, it’s three.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I take the answer to the question is yes. So moving on to that since we could be talking about a singular pistol, you talk about ownership of that pistol, ownership or possession and the second category that we talked about ownership or possession of the singular firearm is police departments in the plural. So just natural English what singular firearm could possibly be owned by multiple police departments in the Amendment?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I’m not sure I understand the question. I’m not seeing the Line the proponent is referencing.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein would you care to clarify?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Sure, on Line 13, it references police departments in the plural. So we are potentially talking about a singular firearm that is owned or possessed by multiple police departments in the Amendment offered by the good Chair, unless I see something differently there.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
That is not how I read the language, I believe this would apply to any pistol or revolver issued by any police department, there are multiple police departments in the State of Connecticut, some of us might argue that there’s too many and we should regionalize and consolidate some of those, but be that as it may, there are multiple as we sit here right now and this would apply to any pistol or revolver.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. You know, accept the answer. I think the proper English would be by any police department would be proper but since police departments. The fiscal note, I note when I can here yesterday morning the fiscal note for this Bill had it a zero and somehow it got changed during the day. How did that get changed?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker that remains a mystery to me.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. And it was mentioned earlier that police officers do not have the ability to carry on school grounds when they are off-duty and I just want; I couldn’t tell from the good Chair’s answers whether he was adopting that legal opinion or he was questionable of that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I’ve not looked at that statute in some time so I didn’t want to put something onto the record as knowledgeable about that statute when in fact I don’t have it at my fingertips.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I must ask if the case is that police officers are exempted from being able to carry on school grounds if they are off duty, if that in someway changes or would change the good Representative’s position with regard to whether or not it’s proper for public safety to exempt police from having to abide by this safe storage Bill?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

It does not, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And perhaps this is an
opinion question but I would like to know why not?

    So, through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

    Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

    Through you, Mr. Speaker.

    As I previously indicated I believe that how
    that officer had to secure their pistol or revolver
    when they went into that school if in fact that are
    either prohibited from bringing it into the school
    or they simply choose not to would be determined by
    the standards of their local police department.

    Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

    Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

    Through you, Mr. Speaker. And I guess because
    we had the qualifying language if they perhaps are
    exempt or that I’ll bring to the good
    Representative’s attention that in 2013 OLR
    addressed this very issue in it’s 2013 R-0192
    stating that we could not pass a law that allowed
police officer to go on to school grounds when they are off duty because that would be in conflict with Federal Law. So I just want to bring the body, bring it to the attention of the body as I move forward. And what standard operating procedure has been adopted by the State Police with regard to safe storage when one of their officers goes to a school presently?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I do not know.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Is the good Representative aware of any municipalities standard operating procedure with regard to the police officer going into school grounds or a gun free zone as they’re referenced in this State?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not aware of which ones have or haven’t. Perhaps that’s a topic that this legislature could take up next year but as I sit here today, I do not know the answer to that.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So what I see here in this Amendment is we’re taking police officers and other individuals that are employed and we’re treating them differently, I’m still trying to figure out way, but on Lines 16 and 17 it references members, “or the military or naval forces of this state or of the United States,” so is that a firearm that is owned and possessed by the military or naval forces of the United States?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Could be.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would hope so that somebody would be able to follow this, I don’t know what could be is. So usually we deal with members of the military but clearly the word members is not in there so, if the good Representative can clarify so that we could actually know what we’re voting on here, what this applies to.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It’s my understanding that generally when you have the Federal Military or National Guard issue a
firearm to a member of their force that firearm remains the property of that agency and merely is used by the member that is in possession of it.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So am I now to understand that it is the member who would possess it as opposed to what this language says because it’s connected to the beginning? The beginning part talks about owns or possesses and then we get to the “military or naval forces of this state of the United States” am I now to understand that the good Representative is inserting the word member into this language?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not inserting language I am merely
suggesting that my read of this is that certainly a pistol or revolver owned by the military that is in the possession of a member thereof would be exempted under this Amendment.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I wish that was the intent but that’s what it said. But the AR eligible issue is the good Representative aware of what happens to one who is lawfully allowed to carry outside of their home with regard to the pistol permit if they were to be arrested under this new law?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I’m not.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Fishbein

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if I was to inform the good Representative that the law presently is in Connecticut that if one is arrested for any crime that if convicted would make them ineligible, their pistol permit shall be revoked and therefore merely being arrested for this new crime that exempts police officers, would result in the revocation of a pistol permit.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, that’s informative, not a question. But Mr. Speaker that is the status of the law, that is a very grave and harsh penalty for something that is very difficult for anybody to figure out based upon what we’ve already heard here today and certainly if we’re going to do something as gray and nebulous that regular people can’t figure out I really don’t see it fair to exempt those individuals of our society that we hold to a larger, a higher standard. So for that reason, I am totally against this Amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? If not will the Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Will Members please take your seats, the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “A”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number Voting</th>
<th>148</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Necessary for Adoption</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those voting Yea 98
Those voting Nay 50
Absent not voting 2

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Amendment is adopted [Gavel]. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended?

Representative Rebimbas of the 70th District.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few questions for the good Chairman now that the Bill as been amended.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom please prepare yourself. Representative Rebimbas, please continue.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

To the good Chairman, throughout the public hearing process we had many individuals provide testimony both in writing and in person regarding certainly support and objections to the proposal that is before us. Specifically regarding the
State’s Attorneys Office, they had raised the issue that the Bill and still wanting to confirm that the Bill as amended here today, causes a serious concern
an example was that what we have before us applies to pistols and revolvers but not long guns. So essentially the example that was provided is if you leave an AR-15 on the backseat of your car and it is stolen you’re the victim of a crime but if you have a 22 pistol in the backpack locked truck, back in the locked trunk and it’s stolen, you’re guilty of a felony. Is that still the case with the Bill as amended that we have?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not entirely sure that is correct. I had conversations with the State’s Attorneys’ Office as late as this morning in which as I indicated their concerns have either been addressed or they understand sort of where this Bill is coming from.
now, certainly gaged at the issue primarily of thefts of pistols and revolvers. I believe there are already requirements certainly for transport of an AR which would count as an assault rifle but certainly as we look at this issue of theft of firearms moving forward, I’m sure the Judiciary Committee could take a look next year at whether we need to beef up the storage requirements for AR or other types of long guns.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So piggybacking on the good Chairman’s response we are punting to next session, next year, to deal with long guns and AR rifles but we are only addressing in this storage proposal pistols and revolvers, why wouldn’t we do it all together?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.
REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

As indicated the issue that we’ve seen and has been brought to us by certainly chiefs of police of some of our major cities, and also the NBC report that I referenced earlier as well as other research indicates that the prevailing thefts are pistols and revolvers and I believe it was the will of the Committee this year to certainly move forward on that issue to try to address that particular concern through the legislation that was proposed.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, isn’t that interesting and I’m certainly going to get to the good Chairman’s opening regarding statistics but the news reports I keep hearing over and over and over has to do with the AR-15s and the mass casualties that that’s caused compared to a pistol or revolver but yet we’re not going to address that here today,
we’re only gonna address the pistol and revolver. But going to the good Chairman’s opening statement regarding that there are a thousand stolen weapons in the State of Connecticut does the good Chairman have a breakdown of where those weapons were stolen?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker through you.

I do not have a breakdown but the report indicated, I’ve referenced indicate that primarily those weapons are stolen in our, from cars in our suburban towns and then often unfortunately are used to commit travesties, murders and shootings on the streets of our urban areas in the State.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.
To the good Chairman if the representation is that the vast majority of these weapons are being stolen from suburban towns and used in the urban cities do you have a breakdown of the number of weapons that are stolen in the cities versus the suburban areas?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a concern of mine. We keep referencing stolen weapons but (a) we have no statistics as to where they are being stolen if they are from the homes or if they are from the vehicles or from a motorcycle. We have no statistics on that. Then we’re also talking about that the majority of these weapons are being stolen
in the suburbs and being used in the urban cities but again, we have not statistics on that. If we’re gonna try to get to the problem I think that is what we should all be doing. I think there is not an individual here that does not want to curtail stolen weapons no matter where they may be. But again when we’re picking and choosing the type of weapons and we have an opportunity to address all weapons makes absolutely no common sense to me as I stand here today. One of the other issues that the States Attorney’s Office raised is the definition of “close enough proximity” and that has lead to a lot of different questions regarding that meaning. If the good Chairman could attempt to define for the good Chamber what “close proximity” would mean.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly as indicated in Line 7 and 8 of the underlying Bill, it is “close enough proximity to the motor vehicle to prevent
unauthorized access.” So is someone got out of their car to pump gas that would certainly be close enough proximity. If someone pulled up to a mailbox and got out to drop off a letter in a mailbox, that would certainly be close enough proximity. What would not be close enough proximity is someone leaving their pistol or revolver in a motor vehicle to go into the grocery store where they did not have a view of the vehicle or ability to prevent unauthorized access.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the good Chairman for his definition of what close proximity is. But this is very concerning to me because I’ve seen actual footage that people who are pumping gas that there is actually individuals who have the ability to access their vehicle and steal their vehicle and the individual simply stepped out of their vehicle to pump gas. And if we’re trying
to talk about close proximity regarding stealing a weapon I would imagine that it is a lot easier to open a door and take a safe than it would be to jump into a vehicle and take a vehicle but then that is happening. So that is concerning to me because again what close proximity might mean to the good Chairman might be serious differently than close proximity of actual footage that we have seen that is taking place in that regard.

The other thing that is also concerning to be is we’re talking about specifically you would be in violation of leaving a weapon in a locked glove compartment because, I believe the testimony from the good Chairman was that law enforcement has raised some issues regarding that the individual would have to go to the glove compartment and get their insurance card and registration. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Yes, Mr. Speaker I believe I discussed that issue earlier.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Is there any law that requires an individual to store their insurance card and registration solely in the glove compartment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Not that I am aware of, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. So it would be commonsense to me that if I had a glove compartment with a lock that is actually attached to the vehicle
and if I wanted to put my weapon in there, it would be much more secured than a loose safe in my vehicle where there would be a weapon in it but yet we are specifically saying in the legislation before us, you cannot do that and the explanation is because law enforcement says it’s not appropriate but yet we don’t have to keep our insurance and registration card, but Mr. Speaker something else is actually confusing to me because this storage requirement is if I walk away from my vehicle. So essentially I guess arguably, I walk away and I want to make sure my firearm is secured, I would put it in the glove compartment, so I don’t see when there would be a conflict with law enforcement except maybe we’re going to lead to some issues where individuals could potentially be stopped and questioned because of what law enforcement may or may not see in the vehicle. So for example.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If an individual is stopped by law enforcement for let’s say a traffic violation, taillight is out, there is a seatbelt check area, the individual
didn’t have his seatbelt and they are asked to pull over by law enforcement and law enforcement sees what appears to be a metal safe located in the vehicle but is unable to see the opening and closing mechanism on that safe. Well wanting to make sure that law enforcement is obviously secured and not putting their lives in danger which they certainly do everyday professionally are they able to ask the driver of the vehicle whether or not they have a permit for a weapon?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I’m not entirely sure. I’m thinking of another Bill we have that out of Committee in the Senate but I am having trouble finding the nexus for the Bill before us and I, off the top of my head I’m not sure.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.
REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I can assist with finding the nexus to the Bill that is before us. The Bill before us requires that any individual in order to secure their weapon in a vehicle now no longer can use the glove compartment that is locked or any other compartment other than a trunk or a safe. So if law enforcement is legally stopping an individual, looks into the vehicle and for purposes of their safety sees the safe and as I indicated cannot see the opening or closing mechanism or if its locked to they have the ability to ask the individual whether or not that is a gun safe and if they have a permit.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

Representative Stafstrom.

Mr. Speaker, I believe they can ask, they certainly can ask if it is a gun safe and I believe they can ask whether somebody has a permit, yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Rebimbas

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you. And once they ask and it is a safe, would the law enforcement officer have the ability to ask to see the safe to make sure that it is properly secured?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Not under the Bill before us, Mr. Speaker, no.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well how would law enforcements know if the individual’s in violation of the storage law unless they are asked to see and examine the safe that is located in the vehicle?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The storage law before us only applies if a vehicle is unattended. So is somebody is pulled over for a traffic stop presumably they have not left their vehicle unattended they were in fact driving it.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I could certainly give the hypothetical that the vehicle is on the side of the road and it has it’s hazard lights, it has it’s taillight out, the individual exited the vehicle, law enforcement stopped to assist the individual, comes over, sees the safe, pretty much same scenario we had given and now asks in order to see if the safe is securely locked.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I still don’t believe the Bill would apply to that scenario. I don’t believe the vehicle is unattended in that situation.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So a vehicle that is still running, with flashing lights, the individual is outside of the vehicle, not in close proximity this Bill wouldn’t apply to that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What is the good Ranking Member mean by not in close proximity?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas
REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

That’s a very good question and one of the main issues that has been raised not only in Committee but the good States Attorney’s Office as well as in this debate here today. One of the other reasons that this is also confusing to me is that we are choosing a loose safe located in the vehicle opposed to a secured locked utility box that is securely fastened to let’s say a pickup truck. If we’re gonna talk about smash and grab, I would think a securely fastened utility toolbox in the pickup truck would be a lot more secure than smashing a window and grabbing a lose safe inside a vehicle. And may, Mr. Speaker I wouldn’t have such an issue if the utility box, the locked utility box fastened to a vehicle was actually part of this Bill. But what this Bill actually does, it excludes that, just as it excludes a locked glovebox. That makes no sense to me. If you see an individual trying to steal and break into a utility box that that pickup truck is obviously an open bed one, that is in plain sight. It is going to be a lot harder for an
individual to do that in plain sight than it is to simply break a window, grab inside and take a loosely held safe. It makes no sense that common sense can prevail in this regard.

I would like to also further explore what the definition of a safe is.

So through you, Mr. Speaker.

If an individual has a toolbox that has a padlock or other actual locking mechanism on it, would that meet the standards of the requirement for storage under this proposal?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It could.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Would that also extend to a container that may
be used for lunch securing as long as it has a locking mechanism on there?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.
I believe that is more doubtful.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):
Would a utility box such as the one you find secured to the back bed of a pickup truck be found inside of a vehicle locked, be acceptable under the storage rules?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Without sort of seeing an example that I am
having trouble envisioning what the Representative is questioning. I can certainly understand and outside toolbox that is in a bed of a truck but I am not entirely sure what she’s getting at.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to clarify that. That exact tool back that you can foresee on the outside bed of pickup truck, just put it right inside the bed of a pickup truck or put it inside the vehicle. It’s that same item.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

In certain scenarios I guess I’m picturing sort of a, some sort of utility van or something. If under the Amendment that we just adopted, if there could be a showing that compartment was fully
enclosed and locked main storage or luggage compartment that is not accessible from the passenger component then in that instance it could qualify.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And that’s just to show again that the same item one fastened to the back of pickup truck is not acceptable but loosely stored inside once again would be acceptable in that regard.

Vehicles that have folding backseats, would that be acceptable under the definition of close proximity in the person’s reach?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I apologize if the Representative could just repeat the question.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas will you please repeat?

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Certainly and I’ll even further clarify. So if you have an SUV for example that the back seats actually recline would that be acceptable as to the trunk portion of that vehicle if you threw your weapon in the truck, would that be acceptable as proper under the storage requirement of this proposal?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I don’t believe so but I just want to make sure I’m clear here. In an SUV it does not have a fully enclosed trunk separate from the passenger compartment, you know, your standard Jeep SUV that has two of the seats and then an area in the back for storage but there is no enclosure from the back seat to the back of the SUV that would not count as a truck under this definition.

Through you.
Representative Rebimbas.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

Is there an emergency exception to the proposal that is before us?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Representative Stafstrom.

I’m not sure what the question means by an emergency.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Representative Rebimbas.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I am a law abiding gun holder with a permit and I’m driving along and I’ve got my weapon right next to me on the passenger’s seat and I see that there is a motor vehicle accident or that someone just got hit by a
vehicle and potentially a hit-and-run and is left on the ground and I pull over, I exit my vehicle and I quickly go to attempt to assist the individual and law enforcement and first responders all show up and quickly observe that my weapon is not securely stored as required by law. Is there an emergency exception to this proposal?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly there is prosecutorial discretion not to prosecute in that type of situation. There likely would not be either the negligence or the intent necessary to prosecute the crime in that instance but even if law enforcement were to charge someone in that instance there is obviously the deferred prosecution component to this Bill as well but I highly doubt that someone would be prosecuted in that instance.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I don’t highly doubt anything especially is that individual might have some type of criminal record whether related or unrelated to weapons it would be one more thing that certainly they could be caught in the sense of we have an emergency exception for a variety of different laws on the books including the use of a cellphone, I think it certainly would be appropriate in this regard as well if we want to make sure that the intent to, is truly regarding the storage and not other unintended consequences.

Would I also be in violation of this proposal before us if, for example I have my weapon in my vehicle, I have my 18-year-old son who serves in the military and I leave him and my weapon in the vehicle and I go into the convenience store to pay, let’s say for gas. So conceivably I am not in close proximity to my vehicle, and I have not taken the opportunity to put my weapon in the trunk assuming I
have a vehicle that the trunk would be acceptable, but I do have an individual who is 18 years old and serves in the military that I’ve left behind in the vehicle, would I be in violation of the storage rule under this proposal?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Potentially.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

And if the good Chairman could highlight way that would be under this proposal.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Line 5 of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

And for those individuals that don’t have it before them, that would be the section that actually says that somebody left behind has to be 21 or older, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That’s correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And how old do you have to be in order to be a licensed permit holder in the State of Connecticut?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam, ah Mr. Speaker I am not
positive on that. I believe it is 21 though.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Well that’s interesting. I’ll confirm that hopefully before the debate is over so we can confirm that because that is very important to know the age that is necessary that I am also concerned about the individual who is serving in the military that probably has, by far, the most training in handling weapons but yet I would now be looking at a Class B felony in that regard. Do we know of any other states that have similar storage rules for storage within the motor vehicle?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe California has enacted a statute and also the Courts in Massachusetts have determined
that Massachusetts storage rule applies to a motor vehicle as well. I am not sure if there are other states in addition to those.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the proposal that is before us indicates that there is this deferred suspension how often could and again I think the criteria was the individual has to be likely not to offend, and it’s a first offense when could they utilize that again, so could they utilize it after three years, could they utilize the first offense argument after five or is the first offense always?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That is at the discretion of the prosecution
and the judge in the particular case. Line 47 of the Amendment which we’ve already discussed says that merely that the person is not likely to offend again in the future. Well actually I take that back, Mr. Speaker. Lines 48 through 49 of the Amendment provide that in order to be eligible for suspension of prosecution the person “had a prosecution under this section suspended.” So if somebody has used the suspension option once, they would be ineligible for a second suspension of prosecution for this particular offense.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if that individual actually had their application to Pardons and Parole granted and they’re prior conviction, no it wouldn’t even be a conviction, and actually it is dismissed and under the proposal before us the record is supposed to be destroyed. So if all the records are destroyed how exactly is one to determine whether or
not this is a first offense or a second offense?

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

   Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

   The same way we do with any of our AR eligibility drug alcohol education programs or anything of the like. Generally there is a requirement upfront that the person swear they have never availed themselves of the program before. The same requirements and procedures would apply here as they do in other places in our criminal prosecutions since it is not new language.

   Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

   Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

   Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And does the good Chairman know what the consequences are if they fraudulently misrepresent that?

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, my belief is perjury.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker, just for further clarifications some vehicles now are equipped with other areas other than a know glovebox which typically when you say glovebox you think of obviously the frontend of a motor vehicle now there is other types of storage areas throughout the vehicle that is not a trunk. Let’s say there is a storage area in the back rear area of the vehicle but not the trunk, nowadays I think they use them as coolers and things of that nature. If there is a locking mechanism is that sufficient under the requirements, the storage requirements of this proposal before us?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult for me to answer that question. I am not familiar with those types of storage areas so I am having trouble envisioning one.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the good Chairman’s response in that regard. Could the good Chairman also indicate what a Class B felony entails?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker a Class B felony is punishable by up to five years in prison or fine up to $5,000 dollars.

Through you.
Or both.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if the court determined that they didn’t want to defer suspension that essentially could be a charge and a conviction on the first time offense. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Potentially assuming the charge wasn’t pled down or there wasn’t some sort of mitigating circumstances certainly that is up to five years, not a mandatory five years.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank
the good Chairman for all his responses. I think essentially what we have done throughout this debate is highlight some potentially conflicting laws and legislation regarding what is being proposed here today regarding storage versus the transportation current laws that we have in the State of Connecticut. We have also highlighted through the dialogue and I certainly would agree some of the issues that individuals maybe facing when they are going to areas that are designated as gun-free zones. We heard the example of a school which is probably most readily known that now if I am going to leave my vehicle, let’s say I am a law abiding citizen, I have my weapon on me but I need to go into the school to retrieve my children. So I can either leave my, let’s say revolver, in my trunk now based on the Amendment that was passed that is now the Bill or in a safe box. Let’s say previously I used to leave it in my glove compartment locked because that is where I thought it was more secure. Well I am certainly not going to buy a safe to put in my vehicle because I still believe that if we are
trying to get to smash and grab you can easily smash and grab my window and grab that box. It’s simple. So to me, now that I have been prevented from putting it in a secured locked glovebox, my only common sense option would be the trunk. So now I am going to be exiting my vehicle, popping open my trunk, taking my weapon off of me in plain view and sight and let me describe to you what dismissal time looks like at a typical school. You’ve got parents, and teachers and administrators and bus drivers and students and maybe even a resource officer, guests, sports teams you name it on a public property observing me take off my weapon and put it in my trunk. And that still might be okay because guess what, they’re probably gonna continue to observe that I’m gonna close that trunk and walk into the school. But they don’t know if I have one weapon or if I have two. So they observed one being secured but suspicion is going to be obviously aroused. But also even more concerning are those individuals that didn’t see me actually put a weapon in my trunk to watch me come out of the school to go back in my
trunk to retrieve my weapon so now they see in plain sight that what I am doing is lifting up the trunk of my vehicle and removing a weapon. What do you think is gonna happen now folks? People are gonna be concerned and you know what, some reasonable minds may thing well better safe than sorry. The campaign has been if you see something then say something. Other people arguably could say that is not unreasonable, just watch what the person does with the weapon. But one second, two seconds, three seconds how long are we to watch. And again this may have been a situation when under normal circumstances I would have put it in my glove compartment, locked, secured, out of view not to alarm anyone. But now I am actually prevented from doing that. That is a problem for me.

The other problem I have is, at least as far as I still know because we haven’t passed legislation to make it legal to have weapons is state parks if I decide once again that I want to go for a hike in a state park and I am a law abiding, gun holding citizen I am once again forced to, in plain view and
sight, park my vehicle, can’t put it in my glove compartment, I’m telling ya right now common sense dictates at least in my mind and maybe one other mind out there, maybe more I am not gonna lock my weapon in a portable safe and leave it open in my vehicle just to comport with this storage law because that is not very secure cause you can still smash and grab the very thing that allegedly this is supposed to address. But going back to my story of going hiking once again in plain sight I walk around to my trunk, and in plain sight view I put my weapon in my trunk and close my trunk. With that said anybody else who sees me, well she’s an avid hiker. Those are exactly the targets that if I am a criminal looking to get obviously a weapon illegally those are the individuals I want to hit, the ones that I know that are going to be away from their vehicle for a given period of time. Again opposed to the option of me being able to just to continue to secure it in a locked glove compartment. And again we’ve already had this dialogue. Law enforcement shouldn’t be concerned regarding that
because if leaving the vehicle unattended, the good Chairman actually indicated that. So there is no law now that prevents me from having my weapon in the locked glove compartment so I would think it would be absolutely reasonable and actually in practice that any law abiding gun owner who may be stopped by law enforcement for any reason and obviously the officer asks, sir or ma’am can I see your insurance card and registration, yes Mr. or Mrs. Officer but I want to let you know that I am a permit holder and I also have a weapon secured in my glover compartment. We’re gonna let them know if we are law abiding citizens. Obviously if I have an illegal weapon in my vehicle I’m not gonna disclose it. So the concerns that are being raised, it’s already being addressed. The concerns I’m more concerned about is the new concerns that are gonna be raised and I’m not gonna wait to see what’s gonna happen with this in theory or practice if we already know the problems we have currently. So again well intended but many unintended negative consequences, those that have already raised in Committee and that
are not address by this Bill as amended and many of the concerns that have been raised here today. Again I think common sense should dictate. There are exceptions and exclusions to this proposal that has no business being exceptions and exclusions and what are we doing by only making this to pistols and revolvers and not long-guns. Do they not cause the same damage arguably and AR-15 more damage than a pistol? That is concerning to me Mr. Speaker, so I certainly rise in opposition to the Bill as amended and seriously encourage all of my colleagues to look at what the current laws we have that actually applies to all weapons and all persons who legally have the ability to own a weapon in the State of Connecticut and if we’re trying to get to those perpetrators that are supposedly smash and grabbing well then let’s do that but this proposal doesn’t do that. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you Representative Rebimbas. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further? From the 23rd District,
Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Just through you.

A couple of questions for the proponent of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

I’m just curious if the good Chairman of Judiciary knows the answer what the current penalty is for stealing a firearm?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a Class B felony with an aggravated two year mandatory minimum sentence that cannot be suspended or reduced by the court and a Class C is punishable by up to ten years in prison.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

I appreciate the good Chairman’s response. If the good Chairman could also let me know does the crime of larceny in the first degree come with a higher or lower penalty than stealing a firearm?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, we are quickly researching that. Off the top of my head I am not remembering what the penalty for first degree larceny is or what the sentence is. It is a Class B felony.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Okay I appreciate the good Chairman’s response to that and I just wanted to highlight the difference because a Class B felony for the crime of
larceny in the first degree the way I understand it is it basically somebody were to steal a piece of art valued at over $20,000 dollars or a piece of jewelry valued at over $20,000 dollars could be facing a Class B felony versus somebody who steals a firearm would be facing a Class C felony and I think probably most folks in the Chamber would agree that what is more dangerous to the public a piece of Michelangelo art or a firearm. I certainly believe the later is more dangerous and one of the things that happened after the tragedy at Sandy Hook was many crimes related to gun violence were raised, we increased, the penalties were increased whether it is a different class of felony or adding certain aggravated charges to that specific felony. An example is transferring a handgun to a prohibited person or violating the transfer procedures knowing the transferred weapon is stolen so that would be a Class B felony with a mandatory minimum of a three year prison term and $10,000 dollar fine unless the court states on the record why it reduces it. I believe that we should make a crime of stealing a
firearm, especially if we are going to create a new felony for someone who according to this body does not responsibly store their firearm, either we are going to create that new crime we should also look at what the really offensive egregious crime is and that is stealing a firearm. I would argue that breaking into a motor vehicle, stealing a firearm you are probably not doing it for a good reason, you’re probably doing it for a nefarious reason and I would argue similar to transferring a firearm that you know is stolen. This is the same type of person that would do that and if we’re going to really get serious about this issue and Connecticut is known for being tough with its gun laws I think we need to be tough with folks who are the most problematic and I believe that folks breaking into cars and stealing firearms fall into that category.

So, what that Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an Amendment that Amendment is LCO No. 8162. I would ask you to please ask the Clerk to call it and I be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Will the Clerk please call LCO 8162 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule “B”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “B” LCO No. 8162 offered by Representative Carney.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization, is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Carney you may proceed with summarization.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Okay, essentially Mr. Speaker, all this Amendment does is it increases the crime of stealing a firearm from a Class C felony to a Class B felony. It doesn’t strike the current Bill; it just adds on to the end of it that stealing a firearm will now be a Class B felony. The offence, a Class B felony conviction can carry a punishment of up to 25 years in prison and a possible fine of $15,000 dollars as opposed to a Class C felony which can carry a prison term of up to ten years in prison and a possible
fine of $10,000 dollars. Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the Amendment and I ask that when the vote is taken it be taken by role.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Question before the Chamber is on a rollcall vote. All those in favor of rollcall vote please signify by saying Aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Wow, I’m not sure. When the vote is taken it will be taken by role. Question before the Chamber is adoption of the Amendment, will you remark on the Amendment?

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

As I said, this is a very simple Amendment, if we want to get serious about the crime of stealing a firearm we should increase the penalty. I hope this is viewed as a friendly Amendment because I believe that it is intentionally going after law breakers and like I said we should be tough on this crime. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. And after I’m gonna call on Representative Stafstrom but if you would like to speak on this Amendment there are names on the board just raise your hand and I’ll try to get to ya. So, Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I certainly appreciate the intent and the laudable goal of this Amendment. My concerns with it are these though: This increases the certainly the upper end of what the sentence could be from a C or a B felony so from a mandatory of ten years to a mandatory of 20 years but the low end of the sentence still remains the same. I think this is one of those issues that before we go into sort of change a letter grade of a felony really should have a full vetting before the Committee should have a public hearing, we should take a look at what the net effective of this and how many folks are in fact receiving the maximum penalty as opposed to some lesser amount. So for those reasons I will ask the
Chamber to reject this Amendment today on this Bill however I certainly pledge to the proponent of the Amendment that if he would like to have future discussions on this issue, I assume I can commit that the Judiciary Committee would be happy to take this up in the next legislative session. With that Mr. Speaker I would ask the Chamber to reject the Amendment.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Stafstrom.

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favor of the Amendment. Yesterday we discussed another gun Bill and one of the things that I discussed was the fact that firearm owners are under attack and that each of these Bills is another little slice of our freedom. As evidence of that we’ve got an underlying Bill here that makes it a Class D felony to store your firearm negligently, improperly in your car and it is only a C felony,
just one small step up to be a person who smashes into a car and steals a firearm. Those are virtually on parity with an otherwise law abiding person who does nothing improper intentionally who may be negligent in handing a firearm admittedly something that should not happen but it is virtually on parity with somebody who is obviously a criminal, obviously needs to be taken off the street and is obviously looking to do harm to others or to sell a firearm on the street for compensation. So the fact that these two penalties are so closely aligned, penalty for an otherwise law abiding person who has likely gone through background checks, likely had firearms training, likely has a pistol permit or an eligibility certificate, gone through all the checks, is a certified good guy but makes a mistake by having the firearm in their vehicle in a way that doesn’t comply with the clearly ambiguous requirements of this underlying Bill. We’ve gone through this Bill with the proponent and identified a number of instances which literally do not make any sense and a person who is otherwise trying to
comply with the law could easily be tripped up with these provisions that are not common sense provisions, that are not intuitive which make no sense and we are currently on the underlying Bill proposing to have the penalty for misunderstanding or misapplying these ambiguous provisions with a criminal who smashes a window, breaks into the car, perhaps tears open a glovebox, searches through the car, steals a firearm; those two shouldn’t be anywhere near parity with regard to the penalties. But under this underlying Bill without the current Amendment that is exactly what we’re doing. So, I support this Amendment. I think those two penalties should be miles apart because they are looking at completely different behavior with a completely different intent, completely different results, completely different ramifications. They shouldn’t be one level of felony apart so I support this Bill, I mean this Amendment and I applaud the proponent for introducing it. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Dubitsky. Anyone

REP. D. WILSON (66TH):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will certainly align myself with the statements of Representative Dubitsky and I think this is a very common sense Amendment and I honestly don’t see the need for a Public Hearing on this because this Bill as proposed and the Amendment certainly would be overwhelmingly the pleasure of our constituency so it seems to be that it’s a terrific Amendment to put on this Bill and we could say “kill two birds with one stone” so I certainly am going to be supporting this Amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Wilson. Representative Tercyak of the 26th you have the floor, sir.

REP. TERCYAK (26TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to oppose this Amendment and ask others to join me. I thought this Amendment, I think this Amendment is
misguided. I think that some of the argument, that at least one argument that I’ve heard in favor of it today, was beyond misguided and we’re encouraged to be mean spirited about this. If the punishment proposed in the original law is too strict then making it less strict would make it a fair goal but to decide that we don’t like the punishment so let’s go bang on somebody else harder is just the worst kind of response. The equivalency here is false people. There are not good felonies and bad felonies. A felony conviction ruins your life. A conviction - period. For most people felony or misdemeanor ruins their life. The worst part of this Bill is we need one more felony, I think not. If we wanted to make progress as a body we would pledge there will never be another felony unless we repeal or reduce two. Our problem is, in Connecticut and America is too many people in prison for too darn long and then the consequences follow them their whole lives. We have been a society where people make jokes about prison rape. We should not be cavalierly increasing penalties
because somebody else is now being punished. One thing has nothing to do with the other except to make the entire situation worse. I think this is a seriously misguided proposal. Please people join me in turning it down. It’s wrong. We are a better society than this. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Tercyak. Further on the Amendment? Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me just say there is absolutely nothing misguided about this Amendment. Nothing at all. If it is misguided to punish someone who steals a firearm more than someone who owns one legally that is confusing to me. That is confusing to me. All this Bill does, all this Amendment does is give a little bit more latitude to the judge to increase the penalty for stealing a firearm from someone’s motor vehicle when it is that much more egregious. As the Chairman of the Committee pointed out. The minimum penalty with
this Amendment, if this Amendment were to pass, the minimum penalty doesn’t change, all that changes is the higher end of that penalty. So if someone is that bad, if a crime is that egregious that the penalty should be raids the judge has the latitude to do that, that’s all this does. There is absolutely nothing misguided about this Amendment in fact it punishes the criminal to a higher degree or at least gives the judge the ability to make that determination. I would urge support for the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Perillo.

Representative Carpino.

REP. CARPINO (32ND):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I’ve listened to a lot of debates in this Chamber over the last nine years and I expect better of some of the comments that are made. I find nothing cavalier about the discussion before us. We are simply talking about holding wrongdoers accountable for their actions. An intentional wrongdoing is the subject of this
Amendment. We are talking about folks who go out of their way to break into somebody else’s property and steal something that could potentially harm others. There is nothing cavalier about this conversation. Folks who are here are here because they believe that they are doing the right thing for the people they represent. So we should be careful about the comments we make in this Chamber. Thank you, sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Anyone else on the Amendment? Anyone else on the Amendment? Representative O’Dea you have the floor, sir.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to associate my remarks with my colleagues concerning this proposed Amendment. I would state for the record that I agree with my colleagues that there is nothing cavalier about this proposed Amendment. I think if we are going to treat somebody who is stealing a gun slightly less horribly than somebody who intentionally breaks into a car and steals a gun within one felony, I think that is cavalier and
wrong if anything is. So I think doing this Amendment makes it clear that if you’re an intentional wrongdoer as opposed to someone who may forget to lockup their gun, as opposed to intentionally breaking into a car I think there should be a distinction greater than one class felony difference. And so I would ask my colleagues to think about how we treat intentional wrongdoers versus more of a negligent wrongdoer. This Bill should be, if you fail to lock up your gun properly in a car, let’s make that a misdemeanor but we didn’t do that in this Bill. The proposal was to make it a felony and simply this Amendment simply makes an intentional breaking and entering and stealing of a firearm a higher class felony. I think it makes sense and should be supported by everybody in this building. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative O’Dea. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Representative
Through you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to; I proudly support the Amendment before us. Mr. Speaker, in our society today far to many times we are trying to transfer blame and responsibility of an action to somebody else, pointing a finger in a different direction, it wasn’t my fault, the gun was available, it tempted me, that’s why I committed the crime. That is not the case. The case here is criminal behavior. It’s the person that’s behind the firearm that decided to break into the vehicle, smashing a window, forced entry, taking that firearm and then intentionally committing other crimes with it. That is the person that we need to focus on not the law abiding citizen, not the person who has a state gun permit that is following the laws, they keep it secured in their car, they lock their doors, it’s clearly inside the vehicle, somebody wants to break in and take it, steal it, commit felonies that is where we need to focus and have a much higher penalty not the law abiding citizen, not trying to
make law abiding citizens felons but the actual hardcore criminals. So I rise today in favor of the Amendment before us and I commend the introducer of the Amendment. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Lanoue.

Representative McCarty.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I just have a very quick question to the proponent of the Bill if I may?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

On the Amendment, ma’am?

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

Yes, it is on the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney please prepare yourself.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

Thank you. Representative isn’t it true that there could be a Class B felony already imposed on the theft of an item valued at over $20,000 dollars?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you very much for that question. It is actually, if you steal property valued at over $20,000 dollars that would actually be a Class B felony. So as I was saying, if somebody steals, you know, my piece of art that Michelangelo painted or, you know, the Crown Jewels of England, yes I could be going to be going to jail or face up to 25 years in prison and the way I look at it, if somebody steals a piece of art and I have to agree with Representative Tercyak that maybe we should reduce that but if somebody steals a firearm there is an intent to do violent damage, there is an intent that potentially somebody may die. So I’m not sure why we wouldn’t want to get as tough on that as we would on stealing a DaVinci so thank you very much for the question, Representative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative McCarty.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

Yes and thank you for that answer and the
purpose of asking the question was really to point out that an act of this sort could already be classified as a Class B felony and that was the purpose of the question, so thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative McCarty. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to make sure that the previous coclique is clear that the penalty for stealing a firearm while typically it would be a Class C if it is an expensive firearm, if it is something that’s got perhaps pearl handles, and heavy engraving or is some type of a curios, something that is very expensive it could be already a B but stealing a utilitarian firearm that an average woman would use to protect herself and her family well that would only be a C felony. And one thing I think we need to make sure that we understand is how few of these
cases are actually prosecuted. I am looking at a chart here with regard to violations of Connecticut General Statutes Section 53(a)212 which is stealing a firearm and it is amazing to me that there are virtually no convictions and almost no prosecutions. In 2013 there were 259 arrests, 259 incidences where somebody was arrested for stealing a firearm. Seven of those were dismissed, 65 of them were found not guilty, zero were found guilty, I apologize, the other way around, 65 of them were found guilty, let me find it and pull it up, 189 of them were nullied. Out of 259 arrests 187 of them were nullied, meaning they were not prosecuted those charges were just swept away. In 2014, 200 incidents of stealing a firearm 132 of them were nullied and 12 dismissed. In 2015, 352 incidences where somebody was arrested for stealing a firearm, 352 incidences 37 of them were dismissed, 231 of those incidences were nullied. If we have any intention of making sure that people don’t steal firearms there are two things we could do, increase the penalties and prosecute those people who were arrested for the
crimes. In 2016, 260 incidences of somebody stealing a firearm, 192 of them were nullied, 11 dismissed, one case where the defendant was found not guilty. In 2017 which is the last year for which I have been able to find records 235 incidences of stealing a firearm 169 of them were nullied, 14 dismissed and none were found not guilty. Those are pretty pathetic statistics. That means to me that we are passing all kinds of laws and we are not prosecuting violators. And it also means to me that we in this legislature, or at least some in this legislature seem to be passing laws that affect law abiding citizens a heck of a lot more than laws that affect criminals. This Amendment would show the criminals that we’re serious, that we’re not just gonna, we’re not just gonna make laws that affect law abiding citizens, that the laws that we pass have some teeth to them. The laws that we pass here in the legislature are designed to prevent people from committing crimes. If we don’t make sure that the laws against stealing a firearm are sufficiently severe and are adequately
prosecuted then all of the silly gun storage bills in the world aren’t goin to do anything to prevent somebody who is determined to steal a firearm from smashing through a window and tearing out some little box the size of a cigar box and taking off with it. That is why I am supporting this Amendment because we need to make sure that those Bills that we pass are respected by the criminals and that once those criminals are arrested, they should be prosecuted and they should be prosecuted with severe enough penalties to make sure they don’t do it again. So, Mr. Speaker I support this Amendment and I encourage my colleagues to do so as well. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Representative Bolinsky.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for a couple of reasons. First of all we have a lot of new legislators in our Chamber and even though most of you recognize that I represent Newtown and Sandy
Hook not all of you yet do because when it comes to Bills like this one which is linked to common sense gun safety I usually prefer to reflect rather than shoot off my mouth and respect the sanctity and the privacy of those in my community that were affected by the unimaginable happenings in an innocent school building on December 14, 2012 which was three weeks before I was sworn into office here. One of the things that I would like to acknowledge to all of my colleagues in this Chamber is that we’ve always had give and take, there’s always been compromise and there has always been the ability to accept other ideas as we negotiate through these things and that’s why much of this legislation has always had the luxury of having bipartisan support. Certainly since I’ve been serving here much to the chagrin of some of my far right constituency who like to refer to me as a Rhino, I voted almost exclusively for these common sense, violence prevention measures. On this one, I got to tell ya somethin, my heart aches every time there is another shooting but I don’t just ache when there is a shooting that occurs
in a public place that affects a lot of people. I ache every single night when I watch the evening news and see our urban youth, our sisters and our brothers gunned down one at a time by illegal firearms that we as a legislature have done a really terrible job at isolating and addressing in all of our gun legislation. Again as a person who votes for this legislation because it is the conscience of the community that I represent, I got to say I love this Amendment. I support this Amendment because it lays some accountability onto people that we have not previously laid accountability upon. Instead we allow our emotions to get the best of us and it happens plenty in my house but if we are going to end the cycle of violence which takes thousands more lives one at a time in our cities, gang violence, drug violence, illegal trafficking of firearms. We need to actually dig our heels in and say that an upgrade to a second degree felony is reasonable. And I’m asking for the first time this year, I’m asking my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to understand that this legislation is a two-way street
and this is a compromise that I think is very important. So on that note, let me just also explain to you the thoughts that I am expressing to you at this very second are actually pretty well-developed because I dare say that nobody in this Chamber with the exception of our House leaders and perhaps Committee members have received as much correspondence on this issues as I do. I have a very affected community that I serve with all the compassion in my heart and I have heard from nearly 200 people in the last 48 hours on this Bill and the two that we passed overwhelmingly yesterday. But I hear from people on both sides of the aisle and on this particular Bill legal gunowners, legal citizens, people that observe the law are begging me to not support it with almost the same numbers as that I’m being begged to support it by my gun violence lobbies and pretty much all the moms and all of Newtown. So let me just conclude by saying that I’ve been writing replies to people on both sides of this issue for about 36 hours and this Amendment is so reasonable to creating the
accountability necessary to have this be a complete Bill that I implore you colleagues to support this Amendment so that we can bipartisanly pass the Bill. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for your indulgence.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Bolinsky. On the Amendment? Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. On the Amendment, if I could.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

A question to the proponent of the Amendment, the Representative from the 23rd District?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just like to get an idea from the proponent exactly what the reason for introducing this Amendment was.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and thank you very much to the good Representative for his question. My reasoning for introducing this Amendment was to insure that as we go through the underlying Bill that we also add on to it a piece that will more effectively go after criminals, criminals that currently exist and charge them with crimes that are more similar to, as I mentioned earlier, larceny in the first degree or transferring a knowingly stolen weapon to another individual or transferring a weapon to a known criminal, so I think stealing a firearm should more be in line with those crimes than it currently is.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and as a follow up one of the questions that I often find myself asking as someone who served on the Public Safety Committee for this is my third term on the Public Safety
Committee, second term as Ranking Member and a question I often ask members of my Committee whether in caucus or on the Committee floor or during a Public Hearing is does this Bill, and in this case, does this Amendment make Connecticut safer.

So through you, Mr. Speaker.

To the proponent of the Amendment, does this Amendment make Connecticut safer?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and thank you very much to the good Representative for that question. I believe it does and I believe that because I think Connecticut, Connecticut is one of the states that has the toughest gun laws and I think this will do a lot of discourage folks from stealing firearms from cars. After the tragedy that occurred at Sandy Hook, I was not a legislator at the time but within that comprehensive legislation after Sandy Hook that many folks in this Chamber,
many sitting folks who were serving back then in this Chamber voted for on both sides of the aisle. Within that piece of legislation there was a lot of changes and upgrades to gun related offenses, changing them from either Class C to a Class B felony, adding aggravated charges, things like that. So I think that was put in there because there was a belief that that would make folks safer, it would make our laws tougher and I think this Amendment similar to that will do the same.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the proponent the Representative from the 23rd District for his answers to my questions. I had been listening to the debate, I’ve been in other parts of the Capital working on other projects however I have been paying attention, listening to the back-and-forth between the Chair and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee, it has been very informative and it is clear to me that the intention
behind this Bill, the intention behind the underlying Bill is to prevent or curtail or limit in someway gun violence. And it is also the intention of this Bill, in my opinion, to support, or enhance or improve gun safety so with that being said, I believe that increasing the penalties for those who chose to consciously steal firearms should be increased therefore making this safer for the State of Connecticut and I would urge my colleagues to support the Amendment. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you like to speak further on the Amendment? Representative de la Cruz.

REP. DE LA CRUZ (41ST):

On the Amendment, Mr. Speaker, thank you. What I would like to mention to is increase in the penalty to me is going to affect a lot of folks that, unintended consequences. I work with the folks that are in addiction and what we saw even just so you know, even the home invasion bills that came out after the horrible accident that we know happened in Cheshire has had a very negative effect
on folks that are dealing with the disease of addiction. We work with people everyday that are facing long term prison now because, you’re asleep, they walk in your house, even if it’s your neighbor, the kids’ neighbor and they know you have these pills in the house they will walk into your house and it is now a home invasion and they are faced with these very high crimes. The same is going on with cars. Why are people smashing into cars, I don’t think sometimes when these young kids go and smash a window to get into a car they are not intending to look or find a gun but once they get inside the car and find a gun they take it anyway. And although illegal, the addicted brain is not making sense to them and they will take that gun and they will sell it. On December 11, 2016 my wife and I did experience gun violence. My son was shot and killed while separating a domestic dispute between a man and a woman. Today as we know it, we have no idea if that person stole that gun, we know one thing that we was never a legal owner of a gun, we know he never legally purchased a gun. We all know
this now in retrospect but the gun was never found. So when I think of Bills like this, I think of Bills that we passed last night although it seems frivolous and sometimes we, I even hear that, you know, it’s just safety and it doesn’t mean much, I think it means a lot of the people who have had a loss and I think it is the people that we save in the future that we haven’t met yet. The person that didn’t get that gun because it wasn’t in a safe or, you know, the teenage kid that is going car to car at night drunk looking for change and finds a weapon. I think it is very, to me, it doesn’t seem like this big leap to basically, it doesn’t seem like a big leap to me to ask people to safely store their guns and on the Amendment, I just want to say that again, we can’t just keep imposing sentence onto of sentences. We do, we are the most jailed population on planet earth. In Connecticut we have more people in jail that any other state which makes us in particular the most jail population on planet earth in this very small state of our, so I am not sure about adding time to that. So thank you, sir.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Mark further on the Amendment? Oh, Representative Fishbein, how could I not see you.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker if I may some questions for the proponent of the Amendment?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney prepare yourself. Please proceed.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, sir. I looked at the totality of the language that is being modified here and this Statue not only has to do with the theft of a firearm but one who illegally obtains a firearm. And am I to understand this Amendment would not in anyway, shape or form change the penalty against someone who illegally obtains a firearm as opposed to steals it?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Okay, we’re gonna look into that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Okay, Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

I guess I await the answer.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Well we can wait, sure.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Sure, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein will you please proceed.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Are you prepared to answer Representative Carney?

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Sure. All this would do is change from a C to a B felony, be Section 53(a)-212 “A person is guilty of stealing a firearm with the intention to provide
another person such other person’s firearm or to appropriate the firearm to such person or third party such party wrongfully take, obtains or withholds the firearm as defined is subdivision 19”.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And am I to understand that there is no distinction between a firearm that is stolen from a car as opposed to stolen from the home, that is not the intent of this Amendment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

That is correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I also notice that I don’t think there is any change in the penalty, we
are merely changing the classification.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Yes, that is correct, we are merely changing the classification from Class C to Class B.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe all of my other questions were answered previously and I have no others on the Amendment at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Case up in the euchre seats.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening or good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
It’s evening somewhere.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Close enough. A few questions, you know, to the proponent of this Amendment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Mr. Speaker, we’ve heard time and time again that we need to strengthen our gun laws.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

This Amendment basically brings somebody who steals a gun or steals a piece of art in line together.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you very much the good Representative from the 63rd, yes what this would do it would make stealing a firearm the same class of felony as larceny in the first degree and it would also make
it the same class of felony as somebody who transfers a firearm knowingly, knowing that it is a stolen firearm.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

What are some of the other examples if the good Representative knows that would be comparison on a Class B felony rather than the C that is in the original Bill. I think what we’re trying to do here is strengthen it and the bad players stealing something, what are some of the other examples that you might have of a Class B felony.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you very much for the question. The one I believe would be most comparable as I mentioned is
transferring a handgun to a prohibited person so someone who is not supposed to have a handgun or violating transfer procedures knowing that that weapon is stolen. I don’t see really that much of a difference transferring a weapon knowing it is a stolen weapon than actually stealing the weapon, so I would say that those two are very comparable and that is why I proposed making both of those crimes the same class of felony.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Are there less egregious crimes that gets a Class B felony other than what you have spoken about, a painting?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):
I guess that all depends who is reading the statute but I would say stealing something valued at $20,000 or more dollars, to me depending on what that is as I mentioned a piece of jewelry, a painting, I would look at that as being less egregious than stealing a firearm. Stealing a firearm I think somebody does it with the intent of using that firearm and somebody who is going to steal a firearm I don’t believe probably has the best interests in mind.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Representative Case.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

I thought that was a question. Must have lost me there, keep going Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I’ll end it with just a few comments. Thank you to the good Representative. I think what we’re trying to do
with this Amendment, it’s not changing the Bill, it’s adding on to the Bill and strengthening for good law abiding gunowners for people who actually break into a car, steal a weapon, steal a gun and there’s consequences for that. We are trying to work in a bipartisan way to help strengthen things and I can only, I couldn’t fathom why we couldn’t agree to make things stronger. I listed to my good Representative from Newtown and it is heartbreaking. I was with him those days when everything took place but man when you hear some of the things going, from I’m not an attorney but going from a Class C to a Class B and some of the stuff that is listed under a Class B and this Bill is just having the action of stealing a weapon out of a car a C has less consequences than somebody stealing something of a value of $20,000 dollars or more makes no sense to me. Guns are a bit topic up here; we’re trying to work together to strengthen things. I thank the good Representative for bringing out this Amendment. I think it strengthens this Bill in a bipartisan way, people who steal guns need to be held
accountable. There are a lot of good law abiding citizens out there that do the right things with their weapons, those who don’t need to be held accountable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Case. On the Amendment anyone care to remark further? On the Amendment? Guess not. Remark further? If not will Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Will the Members please take your seats, and the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.
Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Amendment “B”

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DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Amendment fails [Gavel]. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good afternoon. A couple of questions to the Bill as amended to the good Chair of Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino, good to see you.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I’m a little sluggish right now.

So through you, Mr. Speaker.
Just for the intent of the Bill, so basically you have a firearm in my truck or car and I own both a truck and a car, the intent is to have it in a locked safe. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino I apologize but Representative Stafstrom was in conference, would you please restate the question?

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Of course I will. So what I understand in the Bill, in the language of the Bill as Amended, I own a truck and a car so if I have a firearm it has to be stored in a locked safe. Is that true?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I couldn’t tell whether the questioner said he has or does not have a trunk. If he has a trunk he can leave it in the trunk and if he does not have a
trunk it needs to be in a locked safe.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I own a truck, so I’ll use my truck. So I have a pickup truck. So under the Bill as amended, my firearm, which I don’t have, but if I had one, I would have to store it in a safe, is that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank you for that answer. Through you, Mr. Speaker. So if I don’t store it in the safe, what is the penalty? I have a point where I’m getting. So if I don’t store my firearm in my truck, if I leave
it behind the seat, is there a penalty? What is the penalty?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, again the Bill, the purpose of the Bill is if you leave the firearm in the passenger component of the car unattended, so you’ve walked away from the vehicle and not able to prevent access into the vehicle, then the penalty could be, if it is a first offense and the judge finds you not likely to offend again it would likely be a suspended sentence or for a more significant violation or a repeat type of offense it could be a Class D felony.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I appreciate that answer, thank you. That’s what I understood I just wanted clarification. In my pickup truck if I have a lock box in the back of
the truck for my tools and if they are about 400 to 500 pounds, they go into a bed of a truck and it’s locked. Is that a violation?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Under the current language of the Bill as we are discussing it right now, that would be a violation although as I have indicated previously folks would like to change that we can entertain that discussion.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

The reason I say that is those are very hard to break in; they are very secure but.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If I had a small key safe, a really light safe in my truck under my seat or behind my seat, and my
gun was in that, would that be a penalty or violation?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

   Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

   Could he rephrase?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

   Representative Yaccarino, try that again.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

   In my pickup I have a small cab, behind my seat, very small and if I had a plastic safe or a metal safe and it was stolen and my gun was in there, if I did have a gun, is that a violation?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

   Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

   If the gun was in a safe and the safe was stolen, then no, it is not a violation.

   Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

   Representative Yaccarino.
REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I’m getting to a point. So my gun is stolen, and it’s in a safe, and don’t have proof it’s in a safe, but I know I bought a safe, I had a safe 20 years ago, and the gun is used in a crime, the police find the gun but they can’t find the safe, so who is the burden of proof on? There is no safe to be found but there is a gun, a weapon that was used in a crime. So is it me, the law abiding citizen, am I, do I have to show the burden of proof?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Mr. Speaker the burden of proof is on the States Attorney to prove that you have not safely stored the gun and the burden of proof is beyond a reasonable doubt.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):
I really appreciate that answer but I think if somebody is going to steal a gun, they are going to break into your vehicle, they are going to steal your gun, you are never going to find this safe. The gun is gonna be held so I don’t know how. I didn’t support this. I supported the Bills last night cause there is really no way to prove that you had the safe in your car, unless there is a photo you can’t, there is no proof. You understand what I’m saying? You cannot prove that I had a safe in my car or my truck.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I understand the concern but I think the questioner is misunderstanding sort of the burden of proof here. The burden of proof is not on you the person that had the gun to prove that it was locked in the safe or the like when it’s stolen and ultimately used. The burden of proof remains on the prosecutor. If the prosecutor can’t prove that you
haven’t locked up the gun or left it unattended or the like, then they can prosecute you but they retain the burden of proof, it’s not the other way around.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I appreciate that I am not an attorney but I think logically, logically if I am gonna steal something, I’m getting rid of the safe, I’m getting rid of the evidence but I’m keepin that gun and I’m keepin the money, I’m keepin the jewelry, I’m selling it but I am not keepin the safe. That safe is gonna be the first thing thrown away and that’s the issue with this Bill, you’re penalizing law abiding citizen for something you really, truly cannot prove, you honestly can’t prove it. And if my pickup, does big lockboxes on the box, they are almost impenetrable. Break a window, I could grab a plastic box or metal safe and out in two seconds. So that’s my issue with this Bill. Again I
supported those Bills last night, they made common sense. There is really no logic to this Bill cause it’s gonna be burden of proof, it’s gonna be very costly. I would think most people, if I had a gun I would have it in a safe but the fact is that it is hard to mandate that. So with that, I really appreciate you putting this forth, I don’t support it, I understand your intent but there is really, honestly no way to prove, unless you have a photo of that safe. You can’t prove it. That’s all, so Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the good Chair of Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Yaccarino.

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker obviously as the discussion goes on here today, I do believe a good point has been made about the ability to lock a pistol or revolver in a locked toolbox or utility box. So with that, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment LCO No. 8187. I ask that the Amendment be
called and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8187 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule “C”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “C” LCO No. 8187 offered by Representative Stafstrom and Representative Blumenthal.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Stafstrom please proceed with summarization.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in order to appease some of the concerns I believe I’ve heard today about the ability to lock a pistol or revolver in a locked toolbox or utility box this Amendment in fact changes the Bill and does expressly permit someone to lock their pistol or
revolve in a locked toolbox or utility box and be in compliance with the storage requirements envisioned under this Bill. I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule “C”. Will you remark on the Amendment? Will you remark further? Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize I was handed the wrong piece of paper. So if you would give me one second, I’ll get the right piece of paper.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Sure, is there anyone else who would like to speak on the Amendment? Everyone’s got the wrong Amendment? Okay, we will give you time to get the proper Amendment.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Proceed, Representative.
REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you and I appreciate the proponent’s recognition that the underlying Bill had some deficiencies and adding a locked toolbox or utility box attached to a bed of a pickup truck, I would just ask the proponent if the locked toolbox or utility box needs to be directly attached to the bed or can it be on some type of rack.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you.

I think any sort of attachment so I suppose the rack would work as well.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just ask the proponent if that is the only change, I’m just looking at the Amendment now and I, it appears to be
that is the only change, am I correct in that?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker where we did simply change the definition of the word trunk and renumber based on LCOs recommendations.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

I thank the proponent for that. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Remark further on the Amendment? If not, I will try your minds. All those in favor signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Opposed, nay. The ayes have it [Gavel] the Amendment passes. Will you remark further? On the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative Cheeseman of the 37th District.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. And I have some questions for the good Chairman of the Judiciary Committee of the Bill as Amended.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, madam.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I’m reading the legislation. I see no specific definition of a safe. Would this to be taken as a secure metal box with some kind of lock? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

As indicated previously, Mr. Speaker yes.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

And is there any, I’m not seeing in the
legislation anything that requires this safe to either be concealed and/or affixed to anything in the vehicle compartment. Am I reading this correctly?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

So if I had simply, as I believe it has been stated before, a gun safe on my passenger seat provided it was locked and pass muster according to that definition I would be viewed as in compliance?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes.

Through you.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):
All right and thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, sir. I am referring back to, some of the concerns raised by the Division of Criminal Justice and I know my good Ranking Member referenced some of them before and I don’t believe this was addressed. One of the concerns they raised was that the definition used in the Bill for a pistol or a revolver does not require proof that the firearm was actually operable. Has this been corrected in the Bill as amended?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The definition of pistol and revolver remain unchanged.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):
Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So it is possible that this could be an inoperable pistol or revolver on the seat?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker I think the answer is yes, but if she could just repeat it real quick.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman please repeat the question and you’ll get an answer.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I would be happy to, Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So currently as the Bill reads, there is no proof that this pistol or revolver actually sitting on the seat is operable. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.
REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I’m not sure what she means by no proof. If you left an un-operable, something that is defined as a pistol or revolver that could include under certain circumstances one that is inoperable, laying on the seat and you walked away from the vehicle, when into a grocery store for example then yes, you would be in violation of this provision of the Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So it is the fact that the weapon merely exists as opposed to the fact that it can do irreparable harm and damage that creates the offense?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker particularly if yeah, that firearm maybe inoperable now but it might not take a
whole lot of effort to make it operable, certainly if somebody smashed and grabbed it out of the window and turned that un-operable firearm into something that was operable, it still could cause irreparable damage as the questioner suggests.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, very much Mr. Speaker and there is, they also raised concerns about a question of what unauthorized access means and how would be applied and go on to say is unauthorized access to a vehicle already a crime? So under any circumstance whether I’ve locked the car, left the car unlocked, at any point the weapon is not in that safe box I would be guilty of this crime as described in the legislation?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
No, Mr. Speaker that is incorrect. I believe Lines 7 and 8 of the Bill need to be read together which says that you need to be within a close enough proximity to the motor vehicle to prevent unauthorized access.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. And again I believe there were some concerns raised by the Ranking Member about reasonable proximity that would obviously depend on one’s own physical abilities and prowess, I suspect reasonable proximity for someone who is 75 or 80 might be different from someone who is young and sprightly but obviously that is for further discussion. One of the other concerns raised by the Division of Criminal Justice was again something touched on by the Ranking Member and that was the alarm if may cause if someone is transferring that weapon from their vehicle to be locked in their trunk and they specifically cited unintended
consequence which might cause undo alarm and calls to police about a person with a gun. Further anything a firearm is moved, handled, holstered or drawn from a holster it is an opportunity for the weapon to be fired, i.e. the less handling the less chance of accidental firing. This might lead to incidental discharges. I have real concerns about this and I think the good Ranking Member described in detail. We see the terrible tragedies that have happened at schools. We don’t want to create further concern by having this witness, someone who is specifically trying to obey the law. And I think as we go forward everyone in this Chamber wants to do everything we can to preserve the life and safety of our children, of our residents, of everyone in the State of Connecticut and I have real concerns that this might create those unfortunate misunderstandings. Does the good Chairman of Judiciary Committee have any statistics as to incidents that happen in Connecticut where people do report a legal gunowner being in possession with a weapon?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not have those statistics at hand.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. I think those are all my questions and I would just like to make a few comments. I’ve listened with great interest to this debate this afternoon. I welcomed the Chairman’s willingness to amend the Bill to allow weapons to be locked up in a secure toolbox in a pickup truck. But I still believe this Bill presents issues for me. I was proud to vote for the two pieces of legislation yesterday particularly the one commonly referred to an Ethan’s Law. As a mother of five and grandmother of four, as an executive director of a children’s museum, I can only understand the unbearable pain of
losing a child. One of the things that I really liked about that Bill was the need to educate our children about being safe around firearms because there are people, legal gunowners, hunters, fishers, people who use weapons for sport throughout our state, men and women. Ethan’s Law particularly resonated with me because my late husband was a competitive marksman and the minute we moved into our house he not only purchased gun safes he kept them in a locked workshop to which only he had the key. In addition to that, he has a separate alarm system put on it with a motion sensor because he said, you know, I’m gonna teach our boys about gun safety but I know kids and I particularly know boys. And if someone says, gee you dad has guns, lets go look at them, he wanted to make darn sure that nothing bad was going to happen. But kids can be kids and that’s why I welcomed Ethan’s Law yesterday. But as we go forward let’s also remember those law abiding gun owners, those people who are not going to do things that create an issue for their children and other people’s children. Let’s
punish the people who are actually committing the crime, the people who are breaking into that car, the people who are doing the genuine harm. I will take backseat to no one in wanting to protect everyone in this State and as we look to the legislation that came out of Sandy Hook a big piece of that was mental health. What have we done to address that? Out of the 30,000 people who die with firearms every year, 20,000 of them take their own lives and yet we seek cuts to mental health funding. We see our schools losing funds. If we are serious about protecting our children and I believe everyone in this Chamber is, shouldn’t we spend as much time and effort into insuring that we are protecting the mental health of our children as we spend on debating these Bills? And one of the things, other things that concerns me about this is that we have carved out an exception for tens of thousands of people because it presented a fiscal note. If we really care, if we take this seriously shouldn’t we as a legislature not let that price tag stop us if this is so worthwhile and let’s face it, we want to
believe that every single one of our police, of our local police, National Guard, every single one of them is an upright man or woman and would never do something bad and would never, every leave a firearm negligently as this Bill addresses. We don’t live a world like that. Christopher, his son was a member of the Coast Guard who conspired to kill Muslims. Not everyone is a good person and the fact that we have taken this exception simply because there is a fiscal note I find offensive. So please, let us continue to work together to protect our children, to protect our citizens, to protect everyone but let’s do it in a way that makes sense, let’s do it in a way that doesn’t say okay, now I’ve locked my gun in my car and my gun is safe and someone breaks in anyway and steals it. Surely the surest way to see you have a gun in your car is to leave it in the gun safe there. So I find it frustrating that we’re having to have this discussion instead of really doing what we can to protect our children which is looking at mental health and preserving their well-being. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Cheeseman. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended?

Representative Klarides-Ditria of the 105th District.

REP. KLARIDES-DITRIA (105TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. A few questions to the proponent of Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, madam.

REP. KLARIDES-DITRIA (105TH):

During the public comments did you get many chiefs of police in our municipalities coming up in support of this Bill?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

There was, we did the Public Hearing on all the gun bills together and I recall we do, we did have
chiefs of police there. I am blanking on exactly how many addressed this Bill as opposed to the other Bills but certainly we did hear from chiefs of police on this Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Klarides-Ditria.

REP. KLARIDES-DITRIA (105TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I didn’t see any chiefs of police in the actual Public Hearing in the comments.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Did you reach out personally to any chiefs of police, maybe your own town or municipality chief?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker I did speak to my chief of police on this Bill and in fact he was at the Public Hearing.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Klarides-Ditria.

REP. KLARIDES-DITRIA (105TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

So I think it is important that we’re working on this legislation and keeping in mind that adding more legislation to, especially this Lockbox Bill, I don’t know if there’s a, if it’s firearm rated, if it can be any type of a lockbox but it seems to be if you are going to have a lockbox it should be rated as a firearm lockbox in your car?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker could the questioner repeat the question?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Klarides-Ditria would you mind repeating that question?

REP. KLARIDES-DITRIA (105TH):
Sorry, Mr. Speaker. The lockbox, does it need to be firearm rated?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker as we discussed earlier, no I do not believe so.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Klarides-Ditria.

REP. KLARIDES-DITRIA (105TH):

Thank you, I have no further questions.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Chamber stand-at-ease for a minute.

The Chamber will come back to order. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended?

Representative Hall from the 59th District. Well now we’re gonna stand-at-ease for a second, I apologize, Representative Hall.

REP. HALL (7TH):

No problem.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The Chamber will come back to order. The Question before the Chamber is Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the this Amended Bill. Any further discussion on the Bill. Representative Dubitsky of the 47th District, sir you have the floor.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for the purpose of an Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

The Clerk has in his possession LCO 8223, I ask that it be called and I be given leave to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO No. 8223 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule “D”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “D” LCO No. 8223 offered by Representative Dubitsky.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
The representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Dubitsky you may summarize the Amendment.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Amendment strikes subdivision (1) subsection (a) and inserts an alternative language that adds into it provision that allows for the storage of a firearm in a locked glovebox. It also strikes subsection (d) and replaces the current provision which has a D, Class B felony for every offense it replaces that with a Class A misdemeanor for the first offense and a Class D felony for subsequent offenses. I urge adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The Question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule “D”. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further? Representative Stafstrom, sir you have the floor.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I will accept this Amendment. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? If not, I will try your minds. All those in favor please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

All those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The Amendment is adopted [Gavel]. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? If not will the Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Will the Members take your seats, the machine will be open? [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 7223 as Amended by House “A”, “C” and “D”

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<td>48</td>
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DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The Bill as Amended is passed [Gavel]. Are there any introductions or announcements? The Chamber will stand-at-ease.

The Chamber will come back to order. The Clerk will please call Calendar No. 256.

CLERK:
On Page 27, House Calendar 256, House Bill No 6590, AN ACT CONCERNING SPEED LIMITS IN MUNICIPALITIES. Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The distinguished Chair of the Transportation Committee, Representative Rowan Lemar of the 96th. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The Question before the Chamber is on Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Representative Lemar, you have the floor.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Bill before us allows local traffic authorities to lower speed limits on certain roads under their jurisdiction without approval from the Office of
State Traffic Administration. I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Will you remark further? The Question before the Chamber is I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Will you remark further on the Bill? Will you remark? Representative Devlin of the 134th, ma’am you have the floor.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise with a few questions for the distinguished Chair of the Transportation Committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed, ma’am.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you. So just to be clear what this Bill, what it enables local municipalities to be able to reduce speed limits from 35 miles an hour down to as low as 20 miles an hour, a reduction of 15 miles an hour, is it strictly for those roads that are currently at 35 or could they reduce a road that was currently at 25 say down to 10?
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Office of State Traffic Administration currently only approved that substandard level of 35. There are current existing roadways in this State that were in preexisting status before OSTA approval so there are communities that have local roads that operate at 25 miles per hour. Those roads would not be able to go down to 10 miles an hour because OSTA has only approved them for 35 but they are grandfathered in at 25.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Develin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Great, thank you. So just to be perfectly clear, this applies only to local municipal roads that are currently at 35 miles an hour that meet the criteria that are specified in the Bill and they can
be reduced as much as 15 miles an hour, they don’t have to be 15 but it is purely those roads, correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The good Ranking Chairperson is exactly right.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Excellent. Good, thank you Mr. Speaker. You know, this Bill did pass our Transportation Committee unanimously and we heard a lot of rationale for safety concerns and providing discretion to the local municipalities, so on that basis, I do support this Bill and I encourage our colleagues to do the same. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Will you remark further on the Bill before us? If not will
Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Will the Members take your seats, the machine will be open? [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 6590

Total Number Voting 145
Necessary for Passage 73
Those voting Yea 142
Those voting Nay 3
Absent not voting 5
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

   The Bill passes [Gavel]. Are there any announcements or introductions? Hearing none, will the Clerk please call Calendar No. 254.

CLERK:


DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

   Representative Verrengia, sir you have the floor. The Chamber will stand-at-ease.

   The Chamber will come back to Order. Representative Verrengia you have the floor.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

   Mr. Speaker I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

   The Question before the Chamber is on
Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Representative Verrengia you have the floor.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

Mr. Speaker this Bill expands the permitted use of the Firefighters Cancer Relief Program Funds to include reimbursing eligible paid and volunteer firefighters for their cancer related health insurance deductibles and laboratory and diagnostic testing fees. This program funds to be used only to provider wage replacement benefits, covers its administration expenses. I move for adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, sir. The Question before the Chamber is on Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Representative Verrengia you have the floor; would you care to remark further? Thank you, sir.

Representative Sredzinski of the 112th, sir you have the floor.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a Public
Safety Bill that came out of the Committee unanimously 24 to nothing. Just a few questions to the proponent of the Bill.

Through you.

If I may, Mr. Speaker?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

To the proponent of the Bill just wanted to clarify the funding source. I know the original Bill as passed had some issues with the funding, just wanted to clarify where the money from this account is coming from.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

Mr. Speaker, this is an account that has been previously setup, there is no changes to the financial source and I believe it is a fund of about $400,000 dollars.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
Thank you, Representative. Representative Sredzinski, excuse me.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and just to confirm that $400,000 dollars that is through the Appropriations Budget, correct? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That’s correct.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And the intent of the Bill if I remember from Committee was that when this plan was negotiated in a bipartisan fashion the intent of that was to cover the diagnostic testing fees and the health insurance deductibles for those firefighters who experience a diagnosis of cancer from job related duties. Is that the proponent’s
interpretation?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative, excuse me, Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. The intention was to ask for wage replacement and the only change here, two extra benefits.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just to clarify this would be only applicable to those firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer as a result of their job related duties?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

That is correct and who have met all the
testing requirements.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The last question, this applies to both professional paid as well as volunteer fire departments, correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

That is correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have no further questions.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Are there any further comments on this Bill? Will you remark
further on the Bill? Representative Ackert of the 8th. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Somebody doesn’t want me to speak, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Ha-ha, didn’t work though did it?

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Technically, got an electrician in the Building anybody? And I want to thank the good work by the Committee on this and I always appreciate the looking forward. And I was just curious when we say, you know, insurance and the good Ranking Member mentioned and others I believe, mentioned that it is also for volunteer fire fighters?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

That is correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Ackert.
REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and so is that volunteer fire fighter had his own insurance plan that had maybe not a copay that they had a major out of pocket fee like we see our insurance plans now have like $5,000, $6,000 dollars out of pocket before you receive any benefits, would it pay to service, like if they went to the doctor, would it pay that amount that would go to the doctor?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

That depends, that has to be approved through the Committee.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you and I hope that is something that is in place because that would make sense cause sometimes you go to the doctor and it is more than
the deductible amount and I hope that the fund is solvent enough that if that firefighter had to go get the services that, because our insurance plans, I just looked at our new insurance plan for my company and it is horrific for small businesses out there, so if they work for a small business. So I’m hoping that is considered by the Committee that they would cover the full cost of that visit.

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, thank you for the good gentleman, thank you for the good work on this.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Representative Wilson of the 66th. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. D. WILSON (66TH):

Thank you, Mr. Chair and just a question to the proponent of the Bill please.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed.
REP. D. WILSON (66TH):

So I am curious as do we have estimates of what the annual claims experience against this fund is going to be?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

Good question, to my knowledge there has been no claims.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Wilson.

REP. D. WILSON (66TH):

So through you, Mr. Speaker.

That was not my question. My question was do we have an estimate of what the anticipated claims may be?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

No, we don’t.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Wilson.

REP. D. WILSON (66TH):

So just thinking through the thought process, my question is $400,000 dollars doesn’t sound like a whole lot of money and so the second part of the question would be, would we anticipate that the funding and the future funding of this have to replenish from the claims would also go through appropriations?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Verrengia.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH):

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that it is $400,000 dollars annually up to five years.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Wilson.

REP. D. WILSON (66TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is all of my questions.
Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Will you remark further on the Bill before us? If not will Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Will the Members please take your seats, the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 6384

Total Number Voting 144
Necessary for Passage 73
Those voting Yea 144
Those voting Nay 0
Absent not voting 6

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The Bill passes [Gavel]. Will the Clerk please announce, I mean will the Clerk please call Calendar No. 278.

CLERK:

On Page 30, Calendar 278 House Bill No. 7203 AN ACT CONCERNING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AT CROSSWALKS. Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Roland Lemar of the 96th District. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The Question before the Chamber is on
Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Representative Lemar, you have the floor.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker the legislation before us requires drivers to yield the right of way to a pedestrian who is in the crosswalk, step to the curb at the crosswalk entrance and indicates his or her intention to cross by raising her hand toward the traffic or indicates intent to cross by moving a body part or extension into the crosswalk. This brings us into conformity with most states in the country that do not require, as we currently do, for an individual to walk directly into the crosswalk to signal to drivers that they must yield the right of way. Mr. Speaker, I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Question before the Chamber is on Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report. Will you remark further on the Bill? Representative Devlin of the 134th. Ma’am you have the floor.
REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with a few questions for the Chair of Transportation Committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

please proceed, ma’am.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you. So if the good Chairman could just reiterate the current right of way that is provided to pedestrians today under current law?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar, did you hear the question?

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

I did, thank you. Under current law a driver must yield.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Under current law, a driver must yield to any pedestrian who has stepped off the curb and into the crosswalk. This is a standard that is not enacted in most states. This is a particularly dangerous standard which in its intent requires someone who may be in a wheelchair or have trouble, difficulty
crossing the road or is out with their dog or with their child to actually enter the crosswalk first before a car is required to yield the right of way. This will bring us into conformity with most other states in which we have a mechanism in which you can signal that your intent is to cross the road and the car must stop before you put yourself in harms way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

Exactly how will this legislation change that?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

Now instead of walking into the crosswalk, you step to the curb, safely on the sidewalk, signal your intent by raising your hand, pointing at the
crosswalk and that triggers the standard that the driver must yield the right of way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And does this apply only unmarked crosswalks or any crosswalk, a crosswalk that might have a stoplight or in a situation with a stop sign where there is painted, you know, indications for a pedestrian walkway or totally unmarked, in what situations would this apply?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This standard would apply to all crosswalks that are not controlled crosswalks and that designation means that if a light gives you the right of way by having a traditional walk signal or the walking human signal that governs whether you are allowed to cross or
not. Or in the example where a police office or crossing guard is controlling the crosswalk that standard supersedes this standard. This is for uncontrolled crosswalks.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you.

And so through you, Mr. Speaker.

In many of our vibrant cities and towns there are perhaps multiple people at an intersection that may or may not be intending to cross, how is a driver to distinguish amongst a crowd of people whether somebody is intending to cross the road or not?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

That is the exact question our Committee dealt
with when coming up with the standard we’ve
developed here today. Most of our dense urban
centers have controlled crosswalks in most examples
but where they don’t we came up with this medium
response. In most states in the country, this
standard is a drive must stop if they see someone
they think may have the intent of crossing the road.
Here in Connecticut, again we require folks to jump
right in and hope for the best. So the new standard
that we came up for Connecticut is you must signal
when you are at the curb, you signal your intent by
raising your hand or pointing at the crosswalk, that
triggers the yield requirement.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I think one of the
troubling things while it is well intended is that
if you’re at a crosswalk and there is multiple
people and you’re pointing that that is going to
indicate I intend to cross as opposed to, oh my
goodness look what’s on the road. So how is a driver to differentiate or interpret intent?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

The person determines intent by the very specific action we are asking them to take. Right now, again, you are requiring someone crossing a road with a child to enter the crosswalk before triggering someone to yield. No you simply indicate with an obviously universally accepted signal; I’m here intending to cross. It is a standard in place in some other states. It is a lesser standard that is enjoyed in most other states where simply being at the curb near a crosswalk requires someone to stop. I don’t think we’re in State that can’t accommodate basic rights and privileges of folks trying to cross the road and I think most of us when we travel to other states we
actually are shocked when we approach a crosswalk and people just stop of their own free volition, most people can’t believe, oh my goodness someone just stopped for me at the crosswalk, it’s amazing. Well that is actually the law in those states. We are one of the few states that have such a ridiculous requirement someone must put themselves in harm’s way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just for clarification for the good Chairman, no question that safety is a top concern. My questions relate to the ability for someone to interpret intent if they are not the only one who happens to be standing at a crosswalk. So for example is it required that you’re looking at the oncoming traffic and signaling so not to be confused with trying to hail a taxi but to indicate in that case, I’m gonna cross the street or do I just have to be anywhere raising my hand?
And I think it is important that we have clarification on what the standards are so that someone can be appropriately judged?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

I think we accomplished that by clearly delineating that intent is established if you are within any portion of the crosswalk or this new standard. You step to the curb at a crosswalk and indicate intent to cross the road by raising his or her hand toward oncoming traffic. We think it is a clear and obvious standard that is universally accepted by most people as indicating intent. We feel that this law was well protected in ground law that is established in other states and it meets the criteria set forth by establishing safety, roadway safety for pedestrians who are intending to cross the road.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So just to be clear the individual should be on the curb, so not like back on the sidewalk but on the curb, clearly indicating and that is the signal for the driver. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Leman.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes that is the standard.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Develin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

How far back from the intersection does or is the car required to stop if the individual steps to the curb and raises their hand?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

We did not change the standard under current existing law about where a person must stop. You must provide safe access across the crosswalk by yielding the right of way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

So, through you Mr. Speaker.

Could the good Chairman just clarify what that current standard is so if a driver is five feet from the crosswalk and depending on if they are going 35 miles an hour or 45 miles an hour, or ten miles an hour, like what is the reasonable standard that they have or what is currently in place so a driver would know?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

The current law, unchanged by this Bill, the requirement is to slow or stop such a vehicle as necessary to grand the right of way to any pedestrian crossing the roadway.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, what would the penalty be for a driver who did not heed for a pedestrian signaling on the curb with her arm before they crossed?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

As with current law, the Bill makes violations subject to a $500.00 fine.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Thank you.

And then through you, Mr. Speaker.

How would this be enforced?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

By police officer recognizing an infraction has occurred and issuing a citation.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So just to be clear, if there happens to be a police office in the area and observes that particular instance, in that case there might be an infraction, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH):

Okay, thank you. So again safety is certainly of utmost concern and we would all hope for driver courtesy for somebody who is trying to cross a crosswalk. I think, you know, this Bill did not pass unanimously out of Committee. I think there are definitely some questions about interpretations and enforcement. So I will look forward additional questions related to the Bill. Thank you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Ackert of the 8th District.

Sir, you have the floor.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe a question but definitely a comment. So in my town, small community, we got new things in the town, they are called crosswalks, we never had ‘em before. We actually, I’m not jokin, we actually have crosswalks now. And our drivers don’t really understand what to do, big yellow sign crosswalk. We just had a couple young lady and her daughter trying to cross the walk and she counted 14 cars before she had to step out into state road to stop the cars to cross the road with their bikes. So, the thing that we’re, and I don’t mean to pick-on enforcement but sometimes, you know, you make a couple of stops and it might help in the area but, so this Bill peaked my interest when the people that actually went to the town council and said what should we do to the town counsel, hopefully we can put up some additional signs, we’re gonna work on it and this is
the thing, you know, that people are not stopping when people are there and it’s two people standing waiting to cross the road. It’s just very simple. I do find that the opposite of that happening when I go to the colleges area though where people literally walk right out at the crosswalk, no wave, no anything and continue without really signifying to the. Is there any, if you’re driving in an area.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And I’m looking for a fine on that, but what is the driver’s responsibility if somebody darts out into the road, into the crosswalk area without signaling and/or looking at least at the traffic.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

We do not change the underlying existing law in regards to that. There are certain regulations that are untouched by this law that governs whether and
when you can step into oncoming traffic but
generally it is accepted that if you are operating
at a normal rate of speed with a pedestrian crossing
the road, so long as you provide opportunity for car
to yield and stop, that car must yield and stop.
The standard outline in the Bill is that any
crosswalk marked in this subsection that each
operator or a vehicle shall grant the right of way
or slow or stop such vehicle if necessary to grant
the right of way to any pedestrian crossing the
roadway within the crosswalk. So long as they meet
those three criteria, one you step into the curb.
Two you extend a person or personal object into the
crosswalk or three, the new standard which we would
also allow was to step to the curb and just signal
intent. We don’t change the underlying issues
related to unsafe crossing.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the good
gentleman for his answers. This Bill I will be happy to send this language to my constituent. She will be happy to see this. I still think in our little rural community we got to maybe have a flashing light there because people, it’s something new, a new change to small communities, so I have to help them understand the new law. So thank you Mr. Speaker and I thank the good gentleman for his answers.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Vail of the 52nd. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I can, a few questions for the proponent?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So this would only apply to crosswalks that weren’t associated with the stoplight?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This would apply to crosswalks that are uncontrolled either by a traffic signal, like a traditional walking human or walk sign, or controlled by a police officer or crossing guard.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

So is there gonna be some type of training for the 3.6 million people in the State of Connecticut to learn how to cross the roads with the new hand signals? Is that gonna be something that they learn in school, is it gonna be something that you have to learn before you get a driver’s license, how are people gonna become aware of this new signal for crossing the roads?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.
REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

They will become aware of this through the basic education activities associated with being a licensed driver of the roadway which is being familiar with the road law in your state. As such this standard would actually be more in line with the national standard you would face almost everywhere else in the country that you were to drive your vehicle. If you are a Connecticut driver treading the roads in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine and a variety of other states in New England and you violated a crosswalk in those states it would be because the standard would be you did not stop for someone who was standing at the curb. Here in Connecticut we are one of the few places in the country that does not recognize you being at the curb as you giving yourself right of way to the crosswalk. This new standard is universally accepted, a simple raise of a hand to
indicate is clear and obvious, it signal intent and we believe it is a standard as you’ve seen endorsed by the National Safety Council, Department of Federal Highway Control, Bike-Walk Connecticut, Main Street Centers of Connecticut, planners and zoners from across the city, oh the state, the Transport Hartford coordinators, deputy directors of Transportation, Traffic and Parking and many other authorities across Connecticut.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

So currently now I have to physically be in the crosswalk for a driver to have to stop or if I am standing at the edge of the crosswalk, getting ready to cross, right there at the edge under current law, the driver does not have to stop for that crosswalk?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, unbelievably you have to actually put yourself into the roadway to signal to a car that you intend to cross the road. It is almost an unbelievable standard. I’m a relatively larger human, I step into the road, people might see me. Now pretend I’m not me. Pretend I’m crossing a road with a child or young dog I would actually have to step into the crosswalk, with my young child to signal intent to cross the road and have a car stop. Now this standard we are adopting, again universally understood and what most people actually think is currently the law, stepping to the curb, signaling intent allows that person to may feel more vulnerable than I crossing the road to establish their intent to cross the road and have the right of way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

So under this current thing, what if I step to
the curb and didn’t signal to the oncoming traffic
would they still be required to stop?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, you have to signal
intent in some way. We’ve established the three
ways you can signal intent to cross. Those three
ways again are to step into the crosswalk which is
the current standard; or to simply step to the curb,
raise you hand and signal intent; or to extend a
personal, person into the crosswalk and showing, hey
this is my space, I’m establishing my right of way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

Okay I can understand step into the curb. I
agree with that. I don’t understand so if the
person doesn’t signal when they step to the curb is
there a fine for them?
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

No there isn’t a fine for not signaling, not establishing intent. If you are at a crosswalk you have those three options available to you. You can choose which of the three options you would like.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So is there, has there been any discussion, if, you know, I step to the curb and I go and I guess I think you answered by question to be honest with you. I was gonna ask about liability. I get hit by a car, if I didn’t give my hand signal does not alleviate the drive from any liability?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
Representative Lemar.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No, it does not alleviate the driver of any responsibility cause they would have established criteria, number one which is if they got hit by a car they actually stepped into the crosswalk unless the person somehow drove on to the sidewalk in which they certainly would not be alleviating any liability. There are three standards in which you establish the right of way, one of them is if you are physically in the crosswalk. So if someone hits you while you are in the crosswalk that driver is personally responsible. The second standard again if you would signal intent by standing at the curb and signaling your intention to cross, the third standard, of course, is another one that currently exists in law you extend personal object into the crosswalk.

Through you.
Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND):

Okay, that sounds reasonable. I guess I misunderstood the initial intent. It seemed to me it was like an anti-pedestrian Bill but it seems after you explained it that it might be a pro-pedestrian Bill. I find the waiving part a little ridiculous but if that’s what’s it gotta do to be in there, I think it sounds okay, so thank you. Thank you for your answers.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Davis of the 57th. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening.

Through you.

To the proponent of the Bill a few questions if I may?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I noticed in the Bill
it talks about unmarked crosswalks and what would be an unmarked crosswalk?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again this is a pro-pedestrian Bill. I originally intended as did the authors of this legislation in past years which includes democrats and republicans alike in both Chambers to have the standard go back to what it used be in Connecticut a long time ago where you stepped to the curb and you did not have to signal intent. We’ve created this new substandard that requires someone to signal intent by making a hand gesture. We did that based upon alleviating concerns that some of my colleagues had about, well how am I supposed to know if someone intends to cross, am I stopping every 50 feet if I see someone approaching a curb, so we established this new criteria, pro-pedestrian criteria that does not require someone to step into the curb. We talk
about controlled/uncontrolled unmarked crosswalks.

Again controlled crosswalks are ones where a signal such as the walking human or the walk words flash and clearly indicate when you are allowed to cross the road safely or if it is a police controlled and/or crossing guard controlled. Those are controlled sidewalks. There are both marked crosswalks which you will know from the hashmarks with the straight lines and then there are the unmarked crosswalks that are existing at intersections throughout the State and we do not amend any of that language or definitions or standards we just again allow someone to signal intent to cross by raising their hand and not requiring them to put their stroller into the middle of the crosswalk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

And I certainly understand the pro-pedestrian portion of the Bill I think it would achieve that.
My concern is the driver in my line of questioning.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

An unmarked crosswalk that does not have the traditional white hashmarks on it, how would we identify that as a crosswalk if those identification marks on it?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Here again that is current law, we are not changing what an unmarked crosswalk is, we are not changing that standard or the applicable standards of a driver’s responsibility to stop at an unmarked crosswalk. An unmarked crosswalk is one that may or may not have lines delineated on the ground but is an intersection, any legal intersection is actually a legal crosswalk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.
REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So those crosswalks that are made of brick or made of faux-brick or something like that would that be something that would be considered one of the unmarked crosswalks? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

That is actually a marked crosswalk. It meets the federal standards and for a community to have that type of treatment they have to meet the underlying standards associated with it, that would be a marked crosswalk. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And is there an amount of distance between when somebody steps up to the
curb waves their hand, gives an intent to go into that crosswalk that would require the driver to then stop before coming to that crosswalk? Is there a distance in statute already that gives a certain amount of time or space or distance that they would be able to stop or to just go through the crosswalk without stopping?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

No, currently you are required to step right into the crosswalk. What we would do here is we thought about like how far away from the curb could you be and whether or not you would have appropriate sightlines or ability to see that’s why we established the standard, step to the curb. Step to the curb establishes a standard by which you must meet. The curb is, you know, a definable portion of the sidewalk at the crosswalk.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I understand that position as a pedestrian and as I mentioned my concern is about the driver. So if someone were to walk up to an intersection that is unmarked or one that is marked as a crosswalk, step up to that crosswalk, under current law they would have to physically go into that crosswalk in order to trigger the driver from stopping. Now that individual would have to waive their hands in order to cause that driver to stop. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

They would have to now do one of three things, either physically step into the crosswalk if they
are comfortable doing that. Two stand at the curb, out of the traffic signal with their hand that they intend to cross or three, put a person item such as their wheelchair or their stroller, their cane or whatever item they may have attached to their person being into the crosswalk to establish intent to cross.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I grab a coffee at the local coffeeshop. I walk out, I go onto the sidewalk. I’m from perhaps from where I am standing here today to where the kind Representative from Southbury is sitting and I step up to the curb and I have my hand and there is line of traffic coming down that road. Those cars would have to immediately stop because I have given this indication that I intend to enter the crosswalk and then I would have full access to that crosswalk and the driver would be at fault if they were unable to stop within that safe distance and/or were afraid of being rear-ended
by that line of traffic behind them. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

No, that is not correct. You have to step to the curb.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if I am walking up to the curb, I am at the curb, the curb would be 12 inches, it could be less than 12 inches, maybe there is a situation where I’m in a smaller town where there is perhaps no curb but there is a, you know, a difference between the pavement and non-pavement and then I step-up and I wave my hand and yet there is still that line of traffic coming towards there.
Would I then have the right of way to enter that crosswalk and that line of traffic would have to immediately stop no matter what the distance away from that crosswalk it to allow me to cross under these regulations?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the question is now standard number two. Standard number two clearly states step to the curb at the entrance to the crosswalk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I know there’s situations where perhaps the speed limit is 40 miles per hour. Some larger rate of speed and I were to enter, step up to the curb, wave my hand and indicate I want to walk on this crosswalk even if
there is no signals there, and I forget the term you used, but a crosswalk that does not have signals perhaps and the car is driving at a faster rate of speed, they would be required to slam on the brakes and stop for me if I were to stand there at the curb and wave my hand, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not sure.

Through you.

I’m not sure I followed fully. Again I would just reiterate all we are adjusting is creating a second standard in which a person steps to the curb at the entrance to a crosswalk and signals their intent to cross. Again we are talking about the number of pedestrian deaths in the State of Connecticut and across the country are on the rise. In Connecticut we have a unique standard which further exacerbates this condition by requiring
people literally put themselves into the roadway to trigger a car yielding the right of way. This new standard is consistent with what you find nationally and establishes a right of way to pedestrian clearly defining, step to the curb at the entrance of the crosswalk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I don’t have the distinct pleasure of serving on the Transportation Committee so I am not familiar with the Public Hearing that was on this Bill.

And through your, Mr. Speaker.

The kind Chairman of the Committee, if I could ask if during the Public Hearing was there discussions about whether or not traffic accidents occur when someone steps either off the curb under current law or perhaps with this new law being put into place, indicating that they want to cross that crosswalk and then traffic has to come to a halt,
and there is traffic accidents because of that activity?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

I don’t recall any testimony to the effect. In fact what we heard repeatedly over, and over and over again from constituents there was how unsafe they felt under the current standard which requires them to literally put themselves into the roadway to signal their intent to cross. We heard from Transport Hartford, we heard from the National Safety Council, we heard from Bike-Walk Connecticut. We heard from the CEO of Connecticut Main Street Center, we heard from local business organizations, we heard from town officials and small towns like Glastonbury, Bethel and beyond to large cities like New Haven. We’ve heard from communities across the State who feel like this is a huge quality of life
issue for their residents who feel like the current standard is remarkably dangerous, out of line with national standard and they can clearly make a positive effect, impact for their pedestrians who are increasing seeking more walk/live communities. This standard is protective of their right to cross the road freely to establish their priority within the right of way and would comply with all other safety standards seen nationally.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So under this language of this Bill right now, if I am walking up to an intersection on a crosswalk and I have my dog with me and my dog who is harnessed and or leashed were to then step out. Under the language of this Bill the entire traffic flow would have to come to a screeching halt rather than the current law which I guess would be that the owner would be responsible for pulling that dog back and then waiting their
turn to go across the crosswalk, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if an individual is at the curb, at a crosswalk, at the entrance to a crosswalk and their dog enters the crosswalk, yes that car is required to stop.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I won’t belabor the point but I just feel that this Bill as constructed may actually lead to traffic accidents, not necessarily car versus pedestrian which I total understand that this is trying to prevent that and I think it potentially will. My concern would be it would potentially lead to car or traffic accidents where individuals now feel the need to immediately stop because of the change in the rules. Perhaps
the public outreach campaign of what these rules are and that anytime they see anybody standing at the curb anywhere, making a movement, having a dog or a cane or a wheelchair that might cause the car to abruptly stop and cause accidents on those roadways. So what happens if I, and I’ve done this in cities for sure where I walk up to an intersection and I may not have an intention to cross per se and I want to stop and look around before crossing. Under this law as constructed here, this Bill constructed here would the traffic still have to stop for me or do I then have to make some kind of indication by stepping off the curb of waiving my hands otherwise they would continue to keep driving by?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker in almost every other state in the country and in almost every other country in the world you stepping to the curb would signal cars to stop. In Connecticut we’ve
created a new standard because the people are just flabbergasted by that idea so the new standard we’ve created is you must do one of three things. Step into the crosswalk, the new standard the second standard step to the curb at the entrance of the crosswalk indicating by raising your hand that you intend to cross of the third standard which is current law, extend your person or parts thereof into the crosswalk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as the kind gentleman from Coventry mentioned the universities and it’s something that I noticed is when I had the privilege of attending the University of Connecticut at Storrs that one thing that really shocked me on one of my first days of school up there was that students from other states would literally just walk right into the crosswalk and cars would slam on their brakes, it would cause havoc because these
individuals didn’t follow the Connecticut standard which is you have to kinda of pause, you got to step out into the crosswalk, kinda wait, make sure you’re not gonna hit by a car, these people would just walk right out into the crosswalks and cause havoc and to me I found it be quite unsafe and I thought it was quite ridiculous so I have a lot of concerns about this Bill and these standards that they are putting forth here today. I am going to listen to the rest of the debate but I fear that by trying to protect the pedestrians as we are here today which is a noble goal and I fully appreciate that. I’m a little bit afraid that it could lead to actual traffic accidents when motor vehicle versus motor vehicle because of the standards that would be set here in this building here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative O’Dea of the 125th. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A few
questions to the proponent for legislative intent.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So in taking a look, I did vote no on this Bill out of Committee but I have to admit that you’ve done a pretty good job of explaining the purpose of it. I always knew it was a pedestrian friendly Bill but thank you for that clarification. One Lines 5 through 6 though for clarification, further clarification, any intersection that a pedestrian crosswalk is controlled by traffic control signal or a police officer for example, this law does not supersede that, correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.
Thank you so much for your question. Yes, if it is a controlled crosswalk, by a signal, police officer or crossing guard or such, the controller maintains the discretion. You do not have the right to cross in that crosswalk if you are not given a proper signal at a controlled crosswalk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative O’Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I litigated a number of cases in which pedestrians have walked against a crosswalk, a driver coming across a traffic controlled signal sees that the do not walk is for any pedestrians that would go in front of them, they can go right through no matter what the pedestrian is doing on the side, whether they are waiving the dog around, they are waiving a stick around or whatever they are waiving around, it doesn’t matter, you can drive right through, correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Mr. Speaker, through you.

Yes that is correct it does not matter what you are waiving in the air, at a controlled intersection you are not allowed to cross against the controlled signal.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative O’Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And for legislative intent in an intersection that does have a traffic control signal or a police officer, if the pedestrian is on their phone texting with their head down, let’s say they are right at the crosswalk but they are texting on their phone which happens fairly regularly that would not signal intent under Section 2 on lines 18 through 20. Is that fair to say?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

For legislative intent you are correct.

Standing at the curb playing on your cellphone is not signaling intent to cross.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative O’Dea.

REP. O’DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and I would also say if you don’t have, whether it is two or three, so just for clarification sake, one is current law and two adds if you make eye contact so to speak, although it doesn’t have eye contact here, but if you wave your hand and make an indication Lines 18-20 that is one way you can stand on the side of the crosswalk, not in the roadway to indicate the cross and then the third one is if you put something in the roadway whether it is a cane or some other object that is a way to indicate. What
I’d like to do is just clarify that if a pedestrian comes upon the crosswalk and has their back to the driver and they are not making, well even if they are making arm signals, they are not even looking at you, the legislative intent is it fair to say that driver should not expect that person is going cross the crosswalk?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that I think is fair to say for legislative intent that would not meet that standard. That person must walk to and step to the curb and establish through signals their intent to cross. Walking, you know, backwards sticking your leg out into a crosswalk, the driver should probably stop to see what the heck is going on there but that would not be consistent with the standard established by law.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative O’Dea.
REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My hope would have been that there would have been some eye contact between the driver and the pedestrian should try to make some eye contact with the driver, if that was in here I would feel better but I am leaning towards voting for this. One last, last two questions. How are we planning on educating pedestrians and drivers of this new law? Are we gonna give handouts, anything gonna be done to help educate the public on this change because it is as some Representatives pointed out it is a significant change in the law?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

Just to clarify a prior question, we did not believe that establishing eye contact was sufficient standard, it was kinda hard to litigate eye contact
and for a variety of reasons due to potential disability concerns we did not think that was a standard we wanted to give other avenues for which a specific person could indicate intention to cross. Secondly, I believe I’ve forgotten the actual second question you just asked.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

For point of clarification if the good gentleman could repeat his question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative O’Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

The educational piece, it is a fairly significant change from the current law, are there any educational piece or component to this?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker this would bring us back into closer compliance with what Connecticut law had been prior to the change in the
90s, secondly it brings us into consistency with what the national standards are, thirdly at the Public Hearing it was indicated by a variety of the safety organizations who were lobbying for this that they were willing to engage in the public testimony similarly we’re engaged in public testimony with advocacy organizations across the State around bike safe law, passing law and other standards that were put into place. We did not feel it was appropriate to appropriate large sums of money to DOT to engage in a public safety campaign but we do know that a lot of our allies and advocates intend to be consistent in their past approaches to education of the general public and secondly there is a standard you have as a licensed driver of the road to understand the rules of the road and we feel pretty confident that a standard in which someone steps to the curb and indicates their intent to cross should be sufficient for a driver to know they should yield the right of way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative O’Dea.

REP. O’DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and I thank the proponent for his responses. I see the effective day is October 1, 2019 and I would just hope that our law enforcement would treat this similar to other laws that come into effect fairly new, give warnings but I thank the good proponent for his responses.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Mastrofrancesco of the 80th. Ma’am you have the floor.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I have a couple of questions for the proponent of the Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you very much. You had talked a little bit about the education piece and I see that there
really wasn’t any fiscal note on this particular piece of legislation. I was wondering how we will address the Department of Motor Vehicles when people are being trained to drive, will it be in their curriculum, what would that cost?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker there is no fiscal note attached to this Bill and there is no direction to the Department of Motor Vehicles on how they modify their curriculum. Their curriculum is approved and is up to standard with Connecticut General Statutes and there is no additional cost based upon word change when someone says you now must step up to the curb and raise your hand as additional standards to cross the road.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

So if I understand correctly there was no cost to the Department of Motor Vehicles to change, I mean I guess to they have to change any language in books for new drivers or any of their testing. I would assume, don’t know but there would have to be some cost involved with them changing even pamphlets that they hand out for new learners.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

At no point in time did any of our agencies, any of the affiliates or any testimony at the Public Hearing indicate any challenge for incorporating this change into current standards.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you.

And through you.

So is it, could I assume that it possibly could be a fiscal note at some point?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

I think there is no cause, justification or reason to assume that at all.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

The part where you’re waving your hand, I think when people look at a pedestrian and they’re thinking of maybe a child but we are all pedestrians
if we are not driving, I think of seniors as well.
So I am a little confused as to the hand gesture
that is required, who determines that? Would you be
able to give me or show me an example of the type of
hand gesture that somebody would have to make if
they were trying to make a vehicle stop?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar would you care to
demonstrate the hand gesture that should be shown

[Laughter].

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [Laughter]

Through you.

I have no problem indication what is the
obvious and universally accepted standard of walking
to a curb which is at the side of a road at the
entrance to a crosswalk, which is a designated part
of the roadway in which a pedestrian has the right
of way to access. I would step to that crosswalk
and clearly raise my hand as indicated under the
legislation before us or point to the crosswalk as
also clearly indicated in legislation before us.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [Laughter]

And through you.

So I don’t see anything in here to accommodate seniors so if it has to be a hand gesture and a senior is walking can they lift up their cane and wave their cane?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

Yes, that is clearly indicated in Sections 2 and 3 now before you.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.
REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

What I am concerned about and I will follow up with a question on this is, you know, we are so used to the way we cross the street, right and the laws that we have that we are trained, we are brought up with them, people not knowing this. And then I am also concerned of people that just kind of, just want to make their hands come out to say, oh gee, let me see if I can make a car stop and then that would cause an accident. If someone was to say pretend that they were to step off of a curb, they needed a vehicle to stop so they can cross, and it caused an accident and they did not intend to cross that street, would that pedestrian be responsible.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Could I just ask the Chamber to quiet down, it is becoming a little difficult to hear the exchange the person who brought out the Bill and the person asking
questions, so if you could take conversations outside that would be appreciated. Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker to that vein I did not fully hear the question as it was asked the questioner so if she wouldn’t mind repeating I would greatly appreciate it.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Ma’am could you repeat the question?

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker

I was a little concerned that you know, we are brought up in a certain way, we know the laws, you know, we know what to do when we cross a street. It’s natural, our parents teach us, we’re taught that in school and we know what to do. Now where we have a new law where it is required to wave your hand. If there were, kids are kids, they may want to fool around and say let me see if I can make this
car stop or maybe they are waving their hand because they see somebody they know driving down the street, we’ve all done it. We are all standing on the street corner, we see a car go by and we wave to ‘em. So does that mean if that person stops because now they think they got a wave and that causes an accident it that person, the pedestrian responsible?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar were you able to get the question that time cause it’s still rather noisy in here despite my request.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker irrespective of the noise in the room, I was able to hear the question that time. I appreciate the good gentlem Lady repeating herself. If a child stepped to a crosswalk, raised their hand and signals their intent to cross, the car should probably stop for that child. If it later turns out that that child was simply signaling to wave hello to the driver, wave back, say hello. But by all means you should
probably stop for the child who is at the crosswalk, who has stepped to the curb and who has raised their hand. I don’t think we can establish liability to a driver or to a pedestrian based upon the safe operation of a vehicle in the roadway and if a car driving up to an intersection notices a child at the crosswalk waving their hand, comes to a complete stop to grand the right of way access at that intersection to a crosswalk and an accident occurs because a person following in the car behind them was following too closely or was traveling at an increased rate of speed, or in some way not operating safe discretionary usage, you would not allocate responsibility to the pedestrian, in this case the child raising their hand at the crosswalk you would instead allocate the responsibility were it would rightfully belong to the person who is not safely operating their vehicle at either too high rate of speed or too close in proximity to the car that was approaching the crosswalk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANESCO (80TH):

Thank you.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

I guess I just have concerns with the intent and the hand gesture. You know, I worry about, not necessarily kids, it could be anybody, hi, oh there’s somebody I know, they stop and somebody stops immediately and then they cause an accident. Maybe not so much who’s responsible but an accident has occurred and somebody got hurt because somebody did or did not intend to cross the street. So I will continue, I have some concerns on it, I understand the intent and what we are trying to accomplish. I will certainly listen to the reset of the debate and I will thank the Representative for your demonstration of the hand gesture, I truly appreciate it, I think you did a great job [Laughter]. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Zupkus of the 89th District, ma’am you have the
REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

I have a question for the proponent of the Bill, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed, ma’am.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you. My family often uses the Cheshire Trail and we go from the Cheshire Trail through New Haven, circle around Yale and come back. My husband is training and how does this relate to cyclists?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the good gentlelady indicates the route I take with my family quite frequently as well, probably in reverse the way that she comes in but she comes into my neighborhood if you follow that trail into New
Haven, so thank you for visiting our great city. As the good gentlelady also knows cyclists are pretty prevalent in that area and in the roadways in and around New Haven, they are required to be on the road operating their cycle in the traditional roadway sense on road not on sidewalk. But if you are either walking your bicycle or a child under the age of 12 who has access to operate a bicycle on the sidewalk, if you are on your bike at the crosswalk either extend the potion of the bike into the roadway or you are at the curb with your bicycle raise your hand, establishing an attempt to cross, you are granted the right of way on your bicycle.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do know there are parts that you are on the road but there are parts that you cross in the crosswalk and quite honestly my husband almost got hit the other day and called me and said I thought I was going to the hospital
when I was here and I’ve been there as I said before and people do not stop, whether you are waiving, you’re screaming, you’re yelling, your bike is off curb or off into the left lane. How is this piece of legislation going to get people to stop, when you do these things when they don’t stop now?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Mr. Speaker through you.

The legislation before us further clarifies inherent right to that right of way that that cyclist has and the obligation of the driver to provide that right of way when they are in the either by establishing intent by raising and waiving their hand or by putting a portion of their bicycle into the crosswalk. The way we would enforce this is how we were consistent with other laws, you can have a police officer issue a citation for that offense or violation for that offense, the fine that we have is $500 dollars. We actually just a few
weeks ago passed a further clarification of the Vulnerable Users Bill as well in which we established a standard that if you cause an injury to someone, a vulnerable user of that roadway, your husband, if he had been hurt, he is at a serious disadvantage because he is a very vulnerable user when confronted with a one-ton, two-ton vehicle maybe traveling their roadway. The standard that drivers must begin to accept is that they do not get to drive through urban areas, through crosswalks, pedestrians are trying to cross the road at 45-59 miles an hour and have free access. Pedestrian deaths have increased 35 percent in our country, 25 percent in our State in the last ten years. Those are staggering numbers, 35 percent, nationally since 2008. In the last year 5 percent alone. This helps clarify where pedestrians have the right of way. It is a simple attempt to protect your husband, my children all of us who maybe to nervous, to apprehensive to assert their rights to the right of way. Drivers will have this additional standard that they will have to be on the lookout for. If
someone steps up to the road, signals their hand
that they intend to cross the road, you must stop
for them.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative, excuse me, Representative
Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, you are correct, there are people that
drive 45 and 50 miles an hour on those streets and I
will say it is in New Haven. And there are many
that I would like to have ticketed quite honestly. I’m not sure how that ever would happen unless you
did get hit because cops aren’t stationed there. I
just don’t, I think this is an okay Bill, quite
honestly I just don’t understand how a car is gonna
understand or know how to stop now whether you are
signaling or not. So how?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

How are we gonna educate people to understand
what we are doing when we are signaling to them to stop?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I would just say that the current law provides all the guidance that a driver must adhere to. The current law now just says when that person is at the crosswalk they have to actually walk into the road, now when they are at the crosswalk they can simply raise their hand. It is a new standard; it is not a difficult one to understand. In fact it is the standard in 39 states across the country and the 11 that it isn’t the standard, ourselves included, they have an even higher standard which is if you were in the vicinity of a crosswalk a driver must stop and allow safe passage. We, and I can appreciate that this is not an experience felt in all 169 communities across our State. I understand as the good Representative from Coventry indicated earlier
that many communities have one crosswalk, it is uncontrolled, it is unmarked and people aren’t aware of what the standard is but it cannot be the case that in the vast majority of our communities, in the places where people are using the roadways to get to school, to get to work we are relying on foot traffic to get our cities more vibrant, where many people don’t have vehicles in a place like the City of Hartford, the testimony of Transport Hartford that we saw at the Public Hearing where large portions of the people in and around this very building in Frog Hollow are walking to work because they do not own a vehicle and they are substandard travelers of the roadway, forced to cross the road in unsafe conditions by entering the roadway physically in hoping for cars to have time to stop. The standard has got to be that drivers are paying better attention, that they recognize someone is at the crosswalk with their hand raised, establishing intent. It is a higher standard that we ask our pedestrians than most other states do, again most other states have simply, if you’re at the curb,
you’ve got the right of way. We went a little bit further; we require a little bit more of our pedestrians based on some of the concerns that Representative O’Dea highlighted in the Public Hearing which was, look some guy is standing there, playing on his cellphone am I supposed to stop for him. The answer is no. That person is not indicating intent. So based on the concern we came up with a standard, how can I saw the person on the cellphone is not paying attention, not everyone’s got to stop for them but yes, you do have to stop for the person who steps physically up to the curb and raises their hand. We think it is a good happy medium and addresses the vast majority of concerns and interactions that we seen on our roadway. I would love to work with you in the future to figure out a way that we can make this even stronger. To me this was the place that we could get to this year and it is a standard I have every hope and every belief that Connecticut residents can understand.

IF someone is standing at the curb, with a hand raised you stop for ‘em.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I guess I just make my last comment is that I do think it is kind of common sense when you go to acknowledge and look at the driver. I’m not so sure about the driver of the car vice versa so I would hope this would stop that and I would hope that people would recognize driving as I do, when you see somebody in a crosswalk or coming to a crosswalk I slow down and see what they’re doing and then stop. So I hope some of these drivers would have the same common sense. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Lavielle of the 143rd, ma’am you have the floor.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good evening. I don’t really have any objections to the Bill but I have some things that I am not clear on and I have a few
questions for clarification, if I may?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. First off I wonder if the good Representative cited a few minutes ago some pedestrian statistics of how there was a high rate of accidents in Connecticut which I am sure is completely valid. Do we know anything about the background on those accidents, why they are getting hit, was it because the driver’s didn’t understand that they were crossing the street or they didn’t know what they were supposed to do to indicate they were crossing the street, do we know anything about that?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I use that number I referenced a 2019 study from the Governor’s Highway Safety Association which found
that the number of pedestrian deaths in the United States had reached a 28 year high. That report determined that there were 6,227 pedestrian killed in motor vehicle accidents, just pedestrian’s not car accidents on car accidents, pedestrians who were hit by motor vehicles. I used that number because it was the only verified source that I could find cited in multiple reports, National Highway Safety Administration uses it, AAA uses it so it is the most valid number that I could use to bring to this debate so, if you need additional information for validity of that I certainly can provide it to you. I did not get into the underlying nature of what, I did not tally the adjudicated claims of accidents or how that occurred or what the underlying reason was, they just highlighted that it was a significant increase in the last 20 year and a significant year over year increase from 2017 to 2018.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):
Pardon me, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. Do we have any idea whether there were more or less such accidents in states that had a higher standard, a more complex standard than Connecticut or not? Would we have any differentiation on that score? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, yes. Through you.

There was a little bit they indicated the states with highest population growth or higher population density tend to see more pedestrian accidents. So they got into the details of that a little bit and they highlighted states, you know, that five percent or more increases of which we are one of them, but they also highlighted places like Arizona, Colorado, Florida, North Carolina and they did, it says about half the traffic crashes that ended in pedestrian fatalities did involve alcohol or some other mitigating factor, but they are
generally coming in on the side that distracted driving is the primary cause for the marked growths in accidents over that 28 year period of time. You know, more people, population density, population growth could obviously yield additional traffic accidents but driver behavior particularly distracted driving is a significant source for road users.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

So is the implication then that if there is a little more activity going on, someone actually waving or whatever that will call the attention of somebody who is already distracted, that they will see it, cause that wasn’t clear to me initially?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes that
was a small portion of when we were thinking through what the standard in Connecticut should be. We just didn’t want to rely on what they were doing nationally. We didn’t think Connecticut standard was sufficient, what was the appropriate Connecticut standard? Responding to some of the concerns we heard raised early on, we though, you know what there’s got to be more than someone standing at the sidewalk on their cellphone or stop every time you see a pedestrian and you are not sure of their intent. We should signify intent in some way, too, I generally think that drivers do have the obligation to be paying attention when they are driving their two ton vehicle down the road at 45 miles an hour particularly in an area were pedestrians are so close to them, there should be a standard which we hold drivers accountable in those scenarios. But, yes you are correct. We also thought having a primary indicator that is more obvious than stepping into the roadway but less than just standing at the sidewalk would provide a more clear obvious direction to the driver that they must
yield the right of way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. I thank the Representative for those answers. Just looking at the Bill itself and Lines 18 to 25 in the underlined part of the Bill where it changes, there is, I just want to make sure that I get the distinction between, you know, there is a number one, a number two and a number three of things you can do to show that you are going to cross and number two says, you’ve go to step to the curb and raise your hand or your arm. Number three says you can waive anything else you want basically and it says you have to wave whatever it is, I think, into the crosswalk but it does not indicate that you have to be at the curb. So is there really any difference between these two things or is the difference just what you are waving, are you supposed to be at the curb, can you be a distance from the curb, what’s the difference between those
two items?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the standard that the good lady is inquiring to is standard two, if you intend to step to the curb, the standard is that you must indicate through obvious hand gesture instead number three is you must wave physical extension of your body into the crosswalk. So it would be hard to envision a scenario in which someone is ten feet back yet somehow pushing their stroller into the crosswalk not signifying someone’s intent to cross. So we have the standard established in number two, step to the curb, indicate through hand gesture and in number three step near the curb, maybe not at the curb and just indicate by extension of a cane, wheelchair, portion of your body or extension thereof into the crosswalk. We were trying to modify the standard to indicate intent by people who may be less mobile than folks like myself.
who can clearly obviously indicate intent by just walking up and saying, hey I’m crossing the road here. We thought this was the standard most easily understood.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. I think my real questions here have to do with my understanding of where does liability fall if there is some and I think that there is a reason for having a question about that. We are very clear on it when we’re telling people about driver safety, you know, you must do this, you must do that. If you’re not doing it you’re breaking the law because you are not a vulnerable user. You’re driving a car, you can hit somebody, you can hurt someone in another car, another person, a bicyclist. You can do all those things and people take courses and they have to get a license, so it all seems kind of natural. And even with a bicycle you’re driving something, even if you are still the vulnerable
user. You are driving something and you’re using the roads the way that a car would and you have to expect, you have to respect most of the same rules that a driver would respect but when you are a pedestrian you’re kinda doing your own thing. You don’t have to have a license to be a pedestrian, you don’t have to be of a certain age, you don’t even have to be able to ride a bike, you can just walk down the street, you could be three years old which sometimes happens you know, maybe in a rural area there is a crosswalk and no red light, no city or anything but a very young child could cross the road and you could also have children who are waving and don’t mean to cross the road that have, you know, traffic has to come to a stop or you would have children who don’t know and haven’t been through what would be a driver education course or something for someone with a vehicle. So, where. We are obligating pedestrians in the Bill to do something. We are also requiring responsibility on the part of drivers. So if one or the other doesn’t do what the Bill requires them to do, how is the liability
determined, if the pedestrian goes into the street without signaling or doing whatever and the car doesn’t stop, I think they are supposed to stop anyway, but if the pedestrian didn’t do what they were supposed to do are they liable for something or are they charged with something. How does the liability work in this Bill?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

I think there are many parts to that question. I’ll try to address them quickly and if I miss a potion of it, feel free to reclarify.

One, if you hit a pedestrian who is established the first threshold which is they are in the crosswalk the driver is liable, right, like I think that is accepted current standard. If you hit a child in the crosswalk I think we are pretty clear where the obligation lies. That is unchanged by this. So the idea that there is liability concerns
means that an accident has occurred. At that point the investigation which takes place after every pedestrian motor vehicle accident if that child is in the crosswalk or not, if they are not then there is a different standard. Was the driver operating with a safe and, I apologize for misrepresenting the standard, it’s safe and judicious use of the roadway standard. Was that person compliant with the underlying laws, traveling at the normal rate of speed? Were they reasonably paying attention to the other obligations of the roadway user? If an accident occurs it is a horrible tragedy but often times liability would not be assigned if that pedestrian was not operating inside of a crosswalk. Again if they were in a crosswalk as indicated by standard one and unchanged by this Bill, and now adding a second standard were they at the crosswalk and signaling intent to cross. Again, we suggest that the driver of that vehicle should yield the right of way.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

So is there any case in which someone who intends to cross just crosses either gets injured or doesn’t, walks across the road anyway and people come to a screeching stop and no one is hurt but this happens, has the pedestrian violated any law, is there any or are these just cautions to pedestrians?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

As far as I understand that person that just randomly crosses the road into oncoming traffic would be violating the traditional j-walking violation under that term but what we’ve got before us only deals with legal crossings at marked controlled and even some cases uncontrolled crosswalks.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

So there would be a violation or I’m not sure I heard the whole thing, I’m sorry but there would be a violation on the part of the pedestrian at some point if it were noticed?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, if you just randomly run out into the middle of oncoming traffic right now and you case an accident, there is an obligation on that pedestrian. I apologize I don’t know the technical infraction or infraction case number but it is an infraction to just run yourself out into oncoming traffic and cause an accident. This Bill before us only deals with pedestrians who are attempting to cross the right of way at a crosswalk.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

And does that hold true as well if there is, say there is a policeman down the street but there is no cars coming and the pedestrian sees no cars coming and doesn’t signal and doesn’t do any of these things and goes on and crosses the street, is there a violation then?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

I am unclear as to the discretion the police officer has in those circumstances to determine a violation of the roadway if a pedestrian does not impede traffic or interfering with the flow of traffic and they are just crossing the road, I am unclear what the discretion statute says in that
regard.

Through you.

But it should be noted that it is not impacted in any way under the statute before us.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. I think actually silly as it may sound, I think that may be similar where the Bill is silent is a bit of a problem because you could have, well, you know, an incident where just for unknown reasons someone could be, someone could be unduly penalized for really not endangering anyone including him, his or herself by not signaling when there is no one there but I don’t know. That is very persnickety. But, you know, that’s how laws are.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Mr. Speaker, through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lemar, I didn’t realize there was a question there, okay, go ahead.
REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Sorry.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

In that specific case they would meet the criteria under number one which is they have put themselves into the crosswalk. If they are crossing the road they still have that obligation, you know, to cross the road reasonably under the constraints and rules of the road so that if they’ve just entered the crosswalk, they don’t have to signal, no one has to signal, no one has to engage in that, they can put themselves into the roadway and trigger the pedestrian right of way or they could, like in most other states, find a safer alternative which is you don’t have to put yourself in the middle of traffic to tell cars they need to yield. You can stand on the side of the road and indicate. We are just creating an additional opportunity for folks to indicate that they intend to cross the road safely.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Lavielle.
REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Okay, well I thank the Representative for his answers. I think there is something that’s a little complex here when it comes to explaining to us, to a pedestrian what they’re responsible for and what there really adds anything or not, but it’s not, you know, fatal, it’s not grave for the Bill. So, I just say it’s a little confusing. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

And thank you, Representative. Representative Tercyak of the 26th District. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. TERCYAK (26TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I had some questions earlier, but I think this Bill has been pretty well covered in how it works. It seems pretty clear that we are being the opportunity to join most other states, most other advanced nations in increasing safety and having practices consistent with others. We may even save some lives. I do though want to point out we risk some unintended
consequences. I think Representative O’Dea’s question about eye contact. I imagine sometime what starts out here as a hand signal will continue into a wave, eye contact will be made, a smile will be exchanged. It is possible that on a sunny day in good weather in Connecticut we could have hundreds more smiles than we do now. On a good beach day it could be thousands more smiles exchanged. It is not the plan; it is not the goal of the Bill but it could happen with this Bill. It is a great Bill, it is small, it’s easy. We should smile and vote yes and turn good things loose on Connecticut with this. I thank the Committee and their Chairs very much for bringing this Bill forward. It is the kind of stuff we should be doing.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Will you remark further on the Bill before us? If not will Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. When the Staff and guests
have come to the Well of the House, the machine will be open. Members please take your seats. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if the vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Bill No. 7203

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DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
The Bill passes [Gavel]. Are there any announcements or introductions? If not, I’ll call on Representative Ritter of the 1st District, sir.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, it is always such a pleasure to see you up there and appreciate the good work that you do.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, sir.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

You’re welcome. We are going to have an immediate Democratic caucus. It will be a very swift caucus so if we could all be in there it would be greatly appreciated. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, sir. Hearing no objection the Chamber will stand in recess until we return to the Call of the Chair.

RECESS

There being no objection, the House recessed at 8:24 o’clock p.m., to reconvene at the Call of the Chair.
AFTER RECESS

The House reconvened at 8:50 o’clock p.m., Deputy Speaker Ryan in the Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

[Gavel] The Chamber will come back into session and we will stand-at-ease.

The Chamber will come back to order [Gavel]. Are there any announcements or introductions? Hearing none, will the Clerk please call Calendar No. 497.

CLERK:

On Page 59, Calendar 497, Substitute House Bill No. 7378, AN ACT CONCERNING NEGLIGENT HOMICIDE WITH A MOTOR VEHICLE AND ILLEGAL RACING. Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom from Bridgeport, you have the floor.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill.
DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The question is Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Representative Stafstrom, you have the floor.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Bill before us comes out of the Judiciary Committee and received unanimous support of the Committee at which the Committee was struck by the testimony of the family of a Veteran by the name of Shalymar who was killed in a motor vehicle accident up in Shelton as a result of illegal street racing. Mr. Speaker, illegal street racing both in our cities and on some of our suburban and rural roads has become an increasing problem in the State of Connecticut. Folks who seem to find it fun to get out, get behind the wheel, drive as fast as they can racing someone else posing significant risk of injury or death to other motorists or pedestrians. Mr. Speaker, in looking at our current penalties for negligent homicide with a motor vehicle and illegal street racing it was certainly the belief of the Committee
that our current penalties are too low, the Bill before us seeks to increase those penalties and I would ask for the Chamber’s support.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Rebimbas of the 70th, ma’am you have the floor.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the proposal before us and as the good Chairman had indicated it did come out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously. Unfortunately this is one of those incidences that this Bill comes before us as a result of a very, very tragic death that occurred as a result of illegal racing. So just a few questions.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

To the good Chairman.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the good Chairman can highlight and I know that in his introduction he
had indicated that there were fines that were being increased as a result of the proposal before us, if he can highlight what those fines are?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under current law negligent operation of a motor vehicle that results in a homicide has two classifications whether that motor vehicle is a commercial vehicle or not. Under present law if the motor vehicle is not a commercial vehicle then negligent operation is punishable by fine up to $1,000 dollars and up to six months in prison. If the motor vehicle is a commercial motor vehicle then under current law that offense is punishable by a fine of up to $250,000 dollars and six months in prison. Under the Bill we would increase and conform those two penalties and negligent operation of any motor vehicle would be punishable by a fine of up to $3,500 and up to three years in prison or both.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

If the good Chairman knows why do we have a distinction between commercial vehicles versus regular vehicles.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I think it was, certainly I’mspeculating as to the original drafters of this original legislation some years ago, certainly prior to my service in the legislature but I can speculate that folks thought that negligent operation with a commercial vehicle was somehow more risky to public safety than a noncommercial vehicle. The reason that we are moving to conform these two penalties is certainly
negligent homicide is negligent homicide and whether you were driving a truck or driving a car in a negligent manner that results in a homicide you should be punished accordingly.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
And through you, Mr. Speaker.
Are these fines criminal or civil?
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.
These are the criminal penalties, certainly someone who is operating a motor vehicle in a negligent manner or that causes personal injury likely would also be subject to a civil lawsuit.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe it was highlighted what the first offense of the fines were. If the good Chairman wouldn’t mind indicating what subsequent offenses fines would be?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I apologize, I actually had only highlighted the fines that increase under the Bill for negligent operation of a motor vehicle. The fines under this Bill would also increase for the offense of driving a motor vehicle on a public road for purposes of betting, racing or making a speed record. Those fines would also increase. Under the Bill the maximum fine for first offense would be $150 dollars and would be $300 dollars for any subsequent
offense.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Does this proposal before us make any changes to what the Department of Motor Vehicles can take action upon?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact under the Bill someone who is guilty of the offense of speed racing or trying to make a speed record could be required to attend an operators retraining program administered under the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.
REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Does the good Chairman know whether or not there is any type of fiscal impact associated with the proposal that is before us?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

As with any time we increase penalties there is obviously the risk that someone will spend a longer time in incarceration and there is an associated cost of that for the Department of Corrections.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

If the good Chairman could indicate what the
purpose is behind the proposal of increasing the fines?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

They are punitive in nature and as I indicated the rationale for the Bill is having looked at having had this issue brought to our attention by certainly some powerful testimony at the Committee level we thought it was appropriate to raise the fines for these two particular offenses under our law.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Many times we have certain penalties that may depending on the perpetrators age may have different
tiers of fines or different tiers of punishment does exist in this proposal anywhere?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe there is only one tier of fines but of course the fines are the maximum fines, the court has discretion to issue a fine that is less than the maximum amount prescribed.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And often times there’s discussion regarding the developmental age of a juvenile versus an adult. In this case are we making any type of differentiations, considerations for maybe a juvenile under the age of 18 that may be obviously facing the negligent homicide charge versus an adult
in their 50s?

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

   Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

   The age of majority remains unchanged under
this Bill pursuant to our existing Juvenile Justice
Statute.

   Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

   Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

   And just to clarify my question a little bit
better, is there differentiating treatment. So are
we treating the juveniles, minors any different than
an adult?

   Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

   Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.
The maximum penalties and fines for that are not prescribed in this particular Bill was my point but certainly whether somebody could be charged as an adult or minor remains unchanged pursuant to our other guidelines for that in our current law.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is there any distinction in this Bill as to whether or not the individual is racing their own personal car versus a car that may have been stolen?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

There is not.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.
REP. REBIMBAS (70TH): a

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And does the good Chairman have any statistics regarding how many times there’s these types of incidents of street racing that takes place in the State of Connecticut?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not have the statistics as to how many people may be out on our roads street racing on any given night but the fiscal note does indicate that there are currently 30 individuals incarcerated for the offenses for which we are discussing here today and that there are 41 individuals on probation. That is certainly, the folks that were incarcerated are on probation would be a small subset of those who were convicted and that being a small subset of those who were charged with the offenses we’re speaking with here today.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe during the testimony during the Public Hearing we had heard that there are times that these fines are actually never even levied on an individual. Has that changed in the sense in the proposal that is before us, is there anything that makes this mandatory or once again will an officer or prosecutor later on have the ability to negotiate down this charge for another charge or certainly is there anything else that has changed in this proposal that would change that ability to do that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not believe there are any mandatory
minimum sentences prescribed in this Bill. Certainly prosecutor and judge or ultimately jury if there was a conviction, has a degree of discretion into the amount of the penalty handed out.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

I want to take the opportunity to thank the good Chairman for all of his responses and I do as I indicated rise in support of the proposal before us. Again unfortunately it comes from a very tragic story and it was one of which many of us from the Judiciary Committee hearing through the Public Hearing from the very family unfortunately to have lost their loved one as a result of street racing. It was something that everyone felt the duty and responsibility to want to do. Again we can only hope that maybe this increase in fine may be a deterrent, unfortunately I think many times when we are dealing with juveniles that may not even be something that is in their mind sadly. One would almost think that anytime you hear of a death as a
result of this reckless behavior that in and of itself would be a deterrent. But again hopefully through this there could be some public education and public announcements and people learn from other people’s mistakes in that regard. So I do rise in support of legislation before us and certainly again I think, you know, we do have a responsibility to try to curtail any type of criminal action whenever we can and not just the act of racing but I think it has been a practice sadly of street racing associated with the stolen vehicle aspect of things too. So hopefully the message will get out that this is something that should be avoided, not just for the fines but the mere fact that this can cause someone’s life and the impact that is felt on that for a family is forever. So, Mr. Speaker I rise in support of the proposal before us.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Representative Dimassa of the 116th District, sir you have the
REP. DIMASSA (116TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this Bill. I think all of us on the Judiciary Committee who heard the testimony was absolutely heart wrenching. This family of the individual happens to reside in my district and of course it was a very, very strong loss for us and I believe this is a measured approach to address a very, very serious issue which hopefully we will see a decrease in these fatalities. So I also want to mention that it is important to thank the late Representative Santiago and also Representative Candelora who are not here but they were strong advocates of this Bill from the start. So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Rosario of the 128th, sorry.

REP. ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good to see you up there. I rise in strong support of this Bill with a
heavy heart. Twofold, one I had the opportunity to meet with Shalymar’s family and to see and hear the pain on their loss was something that was deeply profound to me. This is a young woman whose life was cut unfortunately too short and she served our country proudly and secondly, our good friend and late colleague, Representative Ezequiel Santiago this is one of the Bills at the beginning of session that he came to me and said, “Chris would you support me on this” and never in a million years that I think that I would be testifying on this Bill because he wouldn’t be there. So I am just merely standing up and speaking up for Ezequiel since he is not here physically but his work lives through us and is going to continue on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Representative. I am sure Representative Santiago appreciates your support and your speaking on his behalf this evening. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Will you remark further on the Bill? If not will Staff and
guests please come to the Well of the House. Will
the Members please take your seats, the machine will
be open when Staff and Members come to the floor of
the House. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll,
Members to the Chamber. The House of
Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the
Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members
voted? Will the members please check the board to
determine if your vote is properly cast. If all
members have voted, the machine will be locked, the
Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 7378

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Absent not voting 6

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

The Bill passes [Gavel]. Are there any introductions or announcements? Any introductions or announcements? Representative Gucker of the 138th, sir, you have the floor.

REP. GUCKER (138TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise an announcement.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Please proceed.

REP. GUCKER (138TH):

I want to make sure that everybody know that tomorrow at eleven o’clock in Old Approps is Danbury Day [Cheering]. It is my first attempt as the newest member of the Danbury Delegation I have to put it on and I’ll look bad if you don’t show up. So everybody show up, lets have a good time and please support us. We are honoring Marion Anderson and we will also have some other honorees from Danbury. So, please come and visit us. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):
Thank you, Representative. Representative Ritter from the 1st.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow at 4:30 in Old Appros is Hartford Day. We will be competing with Danbury Day tomorrow [Laughter]. We had Hartford Day actually last week and I did want to make this announcement that many of you were able to come even though we weren’t in session. I wanted to thank my Staff, Kimmy and Jessica who did a wonderful, wonderful job of getting so many restaurants and thanks to all of you who made Hartford Day a great success. Thank you. [Applause]

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN (139TH):

Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader. Are there any other announcements or introductions? Hearing none, the Chamber will stand-at-ease.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Chamber will come to Order. Announcements or introductions? Oh, Representative Betts of the 78th. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. BETTS (78TH):
It is so good to see you tonight, sir. It gives me great privilege to bring food for thought for anybody, you are welcome to come by, I have M&M’s, guaranteed to give you a sugar high for two hours, I have peanuts and raisins, I have trail mix and I have a cup for tips. [Laughter]. Any denomination is welcome including credit cards. I thank you for this great honor.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

And we thank you for your generosity when you get to the part about our credit cards. Appreciate it. Any other announcements or introductions? Hearing none, the Chamber is again at ease.

The House will come back to Order. [Gavel]

Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 438.

CLERK:


SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative McCarthy of the 133rd District, Madam, you have the floor.

REP. MC CARThY VAHEY (133RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Question before the Chamber is on Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Will you remark, madam?

REP. MC CARThY VAHEY (133RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Bill is essentially technical changes for municipalities who are establishing a Tax Increment Financing District. In order to establish a Tax Increment Financing District, municipalities must adopt the Tax Increment Financing Master Plan. Currently the plan must be submitted to a planning commission at least 90 days before it options. The Bill eliminates the 90 day window potentially speeding the approval process and requires approval by and submission to a planning and zoning
commission if the town has one. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Madam. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Representative Zawistowski of the 61st District, Madam, you now have the floor.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good to see you tonight.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good to see you, Madam.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

As the proponent of the Bill mentioned, this is minor technical changes to the original Bill. The original Bill was passed in 2015, it is the first time we actually had to change anything. There is no fiscal note, it was unanimous in Committee and I recommend to my colleagues that we vote for it. Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Madam. Will you remark
further on the Bill before us? Will you remark further on the Bill before us? If not will Staff and guests to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? If all the members have voted please check the board to insure that your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 7361

Total Number Voting 141
Necessary for Passage 71
Those voting Yea 141
Those voting Nay 0
Absent not voting 9

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Bill passes [Gavel]. Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 515?

CLERK:

On Page 69, House Calendar No. 515, Substitute Senate Bill 893, AN ACT CONCERNING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR HEMP PRODUCTION. Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Gresko of the 121st, sir you have the floor.

REP. GRESKO (121ST):

Mr. Speaker I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill in concurrence with the Senate.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Question before the Chamber is on Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill in concurrence with the Senate. Representative Gresko, you have the floor, sir.

REP. GRESKO (121ST):
Mr. Speaker the Clerk has an Amendment, it is a Strike-All Amendment previously designated 7541, Senate Amendment “A” I would ask the Clerk to please call the Amendment and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO No. 7541 which will be designated Senate Amendment Schedule “A”.

CLERK:

Senate Amendment Schedule “A” LCO No. 7541 offered by Senator Cohen.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Seeing none, Representative Gresko, please proceed, sir.

REP. GRESKO (121ST):

Mr. Speaker the Senate Amendment is a Strike-All Amendment. I move adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Question before the Chamber is on adoption of the Amendment. Will you remark? Will you remark on
the Amendment before us? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it, the Amendment is adopted [Gavel]. Will you remark on the Bill as Amended?

REP. GRESKO (121ST):

Mr. Speaker, good Bill ought to pass.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? If not Staff and guests to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to insure that your vote has been properly cast. The machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill No. 893 as Amended by Senate “A” in concurrence with the Senate.

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SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Bill as amended passed in in concurrence with the Senate [Gavel]. Representative Ritter of the 1st District.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, I move that we immediately transmit Senate Bill 893 through to the Governor. Thank you.
SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Question before the Chamber is the waving of our Rules for immediate consideration and immediate transmittal to the Governor. Is there objection. Is there objections. Seeing none, so ordered [Gavel].

Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 493?

CLERK:


SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Stafstrom of the 129th, sir you have the floor.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Question before the Chamber is Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage
of the Bill. Will you remark?

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker this Bill continues the efforts we’ve made over the last couple of years to try to reduce the backlog of cases in the Office of the Claims Commissioner and allow folks speedy opportunity to present their claims. I urge support of the Bill. With that the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment LCO No. 8262. I ask that the Clerk call the Amendment and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO No. 8262 which will be designated as House Amendment Schedule “A”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “A” LCO No. 8282 offered by Representative Stafstrom, Representative Rebimbas and Senator Winfield.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection? Seeing none, Representative Stafstrom.
REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, the Amendment merely changes some of the dollar thresholds. I move adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Question before the Chamber is adoption of the Amendment. Representative Rebimbas, you have the floor, Madam. Representative Rebimbas has the floor.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I rise in support of the Amendment and I want to thank everyone that was involved regarding the Amendment including the Claims Commissioner herself for taking the opportunity to have conversations on both sides of the aisle and reaching this compromise and I just want to highlight to my colleagues; I do encourage their support. There is a few Republicans that voted against it in Committee and that was because the threshold was $50,000 dollars and now it is down to $35,000 in compromising. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Thank you very much, Madam. Question before the Chamber is on adoption of the Resolution. Will you remark? Seeing none, all those in favor signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it [Gavel], the Amendment is adopted. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? If not Staff and guests to the Well of the House. Members please take your seats; the machine will be open.

[Slapping]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all members voted? Please check the board to ensure your
determine if your vote is proper. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 7343 as Amended by House “A”

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DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Bill passes [Gavel]. Mr. Clerk, kindly call Calendar 173.

CLERK:


DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The distinguished Chairwoman of the Labor Committee Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Clerk has an Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

I think maybe first you should move adoption of the [cross talking].

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I move adoption, I’m excited. What can I tell ya? I move adoption. [Laughter].

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Question is on Acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and Passage of the Bill. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Clerk has an Amendment LCO 8234. I would ask that the Clerk please call the Amendment and that I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Clerk is indeed in possession of LCO No. 8234 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule “A”. Mr. Clerk please call.
CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “A” LCO No. 8234 offered by Representative Aresimowicz.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The gentlewoman has asked leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there objection to summarization? Hearing none, Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise and I stand this night with 332,000 workers in the State of Connecticut and their families and I bring to the floor tonight, a Bill that I will introduce to this Chamber that raises the minimum wage from $10.10 to $15.00 an hour over four and a half years and then indexes it to the employment cost index beginning October 1, 2019 at $11.00 an hour, September 1, 2020 at $12.00 an hour, August 1, 2021 $13.00 an hour, July 1st – my birthday, 2022 $14.00 dollars an hour, June 1st, 2023, $15.00 an hour and in 2024 we will index it to the ECI. It will be coupled with the tip-worker wage for the minimum wage creating a new system to stipulate employees share of the minimum
wage frozen at the current rate that restaurants are to pay tipped workers who make tips. It will eliminate the current learnin and beginners wage, create a new wage for those under 18 for the first 90 days of employment, prevent employers from displacing workers 18 and up and for workers under 18. The current new system will also include two consecutive quarters of negative growth that the DOL and then the governor can recommend suspending the scheduled minimum wage adjustment. In closing it requires the DOL Commissioner to conduct a study on tip workers and what does that mean, and who is impacted and directly affected, well when we talk about the State of Connecticut that would include all workers, 332,000 people. Women, 195,000 all Black and Hispanic workers 152,000, single parent 52,000, working mothers 55,000, people makin less than $25,000 dollars a year 107,000, at or below the poverty line 54,000, retail trade 79,000, healthcare 53,000. These are the people that we will be helpin to lift out of poverty in the State of Connecticut as we move to pass this legislation and we have gone
through many deliberations, we have made compromises to make sure that this is a Bill that all can be comfortable with and have confidence that we are doin the right thing at the right time to make sure that every worker in the State of Connecticut has a way up and a way out. And this is personal for me because not only do I have constituents in my district and friends throughout this state who struggle, workin two and three jobs, four in some instances to make ends meet. I have been that mother, a divorced mom, raisin two children, havin to work two and three jobs. Not being there when I wanted to be there at the PTA meetin, havin to miss afterschool programs, plays and things of that nature so I understand what it is and I stand in here as the Chair of the Labor and Public Employees Committee representing the hardworking people in this good State. This has been a long time comin, it is long overdue and I am excited and I want to thank my colleagues for bein there to help make this happen and gettin it across what will soon be the finish line. I thank you; I look forward to this
debate and I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Question on adoption of House Amendment Schedule “A”. Will you remark further ma’am?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Nope.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

When the vote is taken I will be taking it my roll call. The distinguished Ranking Member of the Labor Committee, Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

I’ll wait until this Amendment is adopted and speak on the underlying Bill. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

On House “A”, Representative Lavielle? Will anyone else like to or not like to remark on House Amendment Schedule “A”? In which case members take your seats, Staff and guests to the Well of the House. The machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of
Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Have all members voted? If so the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

And the Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House “A”

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DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Amendment is adopted [Gavel]. Now

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker and obviously I rise this evening in actually I want to say something before I start. This Amendment that we just voted on which was literally handed to me minutes ago before we voted on it. The complete disregard and
disrespect of this side of the aisle in this Chamber is totally unacceptable. There are multiple changes that affect thousands and thousands of workers across the State of Connecticut, and this document was handed to us moments ago with little time to read which is why folks on my side of the aisle are upset and concerned about this piece of legislation. With that I have some opening remarks and many questions for the proponent of the Bill.

Obviously I rise in strong opposition to this Bill as written. During our nearly ten to twelve hours of listening to the Public Hearing on this particular topic we heard from both sides, both for and against an increase in the minimum wage. It was an emotional topic. There were moms, single parents that came in and spoke about how they can’t make it on $10.10, how Connecticut is unaffordable and how this would offer them some sort of lift out of poverty. But on the other side of that we have a small business community that came in and spoke to our Labor and Public Employees Committee. We had small business owners from all parts of the State
and I am sure that touches just about every district in this Chamber. They weren’t just concerned about the increase in minimum wage. They were concerned about everything else coming down the pipeline in 2019 and beyond. We heard about a small grocery owner who owns a few stores who was kind enough to bring us in some food because we were there at midnight and how he said, and how I know him because he is a constituent of mine, that he doesn’t live a lavish lifestyle. That just a small increase in the minimum wage would cost him hundreds of thousands of dollars per year in payroll. Couple that with other proposals that have come down the pipeline such as electronic tolling. This is bad for business. We heard from business advocacy groups like the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, the NFIB and others, the Food Association, the Restaurant Association. Pockets of businesses across Connecticut that are thriving, that were pleading for our Committee to rethink this piece of legislation. After 12 plus hours of testimony we were told, my side of the aisle, this was a work in
progress. Well I guess this is a work in progress because the Bill was just drafted ten minutes ago and amended and what I see and what I read in the last five minutes it looks very similar to what we were given a few months ago during the public hearing. I guess it’s still a work in progress.

We are trying as a legislature to make Connecticut a great place to live, work and raise a family. You know, it’s not just our side that speaks about that, it is a bipartisan effort. We have passed a lot of Bills with bipartisan support in here to send a message to business owners that we are open for business but this Bill as amended does not do that. It doesn’t even get us close. We need to send a message to the job creators in Connecticut that we are on their side, that they are telling us we can’t afford this, we need to actually take it seriously and not just brush it by. There was a lot of debate that night about what a living wage is in Connecticut. And, you know, I struggle with this too, I am trying to figure out for myself, and I don’t know of anyone knows in this room what the
actual living wage is in Connecticut. But I am goin
to say confidentially that the living wage is far
above $15.00 an hour. We pay the highest taxes in
this State, it is the most expensive State to open
up a business, the most expensive State to live in.
We pay a gas tax, we pay a state income tax, we are
going to be paying tolls pretty soon, now we are
going to be paying more money to go to the grocery
market to buy goods because the employer is gonna
have to pay more money to his employees that are
working there. So I am concerned about what type of
message that we are sending these folks across
Connecticut, job creators, small business owners.
It isn’t the large corporation folks we’re talkin
about here, it’s the small businesses that employ
five, ten, fifteen people that are gonna be hurt by
this piece of legislation. You know, we also heard
that night from the seasonal part-time employers of
Connecticut, the amusement parks and such. These
folks employ young, 17, 18, 19-year-old kids
throughout the summer at the current rate $10.10 an
hour and this individual that came in spoke at
length about how he teaches his workers life
lessons, how when they go in to work for a couple of
months in the summer, they just don’t, you know, sit
there and push a button for the ride, they learn how
to save a few bucks at the end of the week if they
want to go out and see a movie with their friends.
They learn how to, you know, it’s a life lesson. So
why would we want to hinder these people from hiring
our youth across the State of Connecticut? In my
district I spoke with someone just the other day who
said I want my child to work in the summer, I don’t
know about you but I don’t want him on the couch
surfing Facebook and playing Minecraft. I want him
out in the community becoming a productive member of
society, yet small business owners have told us, we
are gonna halt hiring if you raise the minimum wage
at this rate. It was also suggested that we
increase it over a six-year period, maybe even a
seven-year period. The way I am reading this
Amendment and again I just got it five minutes ago,
it gets us there in four and one-half years, much
too fast. And with this I do have questions for the
proponent of the Bill and I will make some more remarks.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed, sir.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Through you.

To the good Chair, has anyone consulted with the Connecticut Business and Industry Association or any other small business groups across Connecticut on what this particular piece of legislation would mean for their members?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter, do you care to respond?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, yes. We have consulted with small business. I have consulted with small businesses in my district.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.
REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

So I guess, let me rephrase the question. Has anyone consulted specifically with some of the larger groups that have extensive memberships of small business across Connecticut?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Are these groups in favor of this piece of legislation?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

As a whole, as a group they are not in support of this but there are members on these groups, in
these groups that are.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Specifically do we have any companies that employ 15 or 20 workers in that group that came before the Public Hearing that spoke in favor of an increase to $15.00 dollars per hour?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Not to my recollection but I have spoken to groups in my district and other districts.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And thank you and thank you to the good chair for those answers. So let me expound on that for
just a moment. So basically what was just said is that not one business advocacy group is in favor of this piece of legislation. This is a time where Connecticut lost 1,400 jobs in March. Let me repeat that for everybody. Connecticut lost 1,400 jobs in March when the Nation is seeing all time unemployment lows for the Black and Hispanic community, Asian employment is at its lowest levels ever. We are seeing levels that we haven’t seen in 70 years, yet Connecticut is lagging behind. GDP 3.2 percent nationally, Connecticut nowhere near that. We can only hope that we are doing good as the rest of the Nation. So when I hear that I sat through 12 hours of testimony and not one small business group came in there and said, hey, we want to pay our employees $15 dollars an hour and those that are making $15 dollars we want to give them $20 dollars and those that are making $20 dollars we want to give them $25 dollars. I would have listened but we didn’t hear that. We heard, you know what we’re gonna do, we are going to self-checkout. We are going automated. We are going to start laying off
workers or creating a way around this system so that way we don’t have to pay our workers that much. That is concerning to me. If Connecticut created 1,400 jobs in March then I would say okay, you know what, we’re doing great. The fact of the matter is this State is not doing great. And we all know it.

Numbers don’t lie. I was always a numbers person. I look at the stats. We have lost jobs every single month in 2019, that is concerning. Anyone who sits in this Chamber and thinks that our economy is doing good in Connecticut needs to reexamine the numbers. With that I have another questions for the good Chair of the Connecticut. The last time we saw minimum wage increases does the good Chair.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What the rate was from what to what?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Allow me to pull that, 2017 was when we went to $10.10, that began in 2015 and
it was a 3-year increase from $8.75 dollars to $10.10 dollars.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Thank you, Madam Chair.

And through you.

So over a three-year period we raised the minimum wage, I’m sorry, I believe she said $8.25 to $10.10, $8.75 to $10.10. So over a three year period we were at roughly, let’s see what the math there, $1.35 over three years. Correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That is correct. We had a three year increase in the wage, first it was a 45 cent raise, second year 45 cent raise, third year 50 cent raise.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So $1.35 over three years and the current Bill, as I understand it.

Through you.

Over the next 4-and-a-half years raises it from $10.10 to $15.00 dollars, correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

That is correct, Mr. Speaker, $10.10 to $15.00 over four-and-a-half years.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

So we see an increase of $1.35 cents over three years, just a few years back and I’m gonna revert back to our Public Hearing because there was some very telling testimony on this instance. We had
groups that actually came into the Public Hearing testimony and said they were okay with the increase last time because the rate at which it went up was not as drastic as this time. Now one would think back when this increase went into effect the economy was better in Connecticut. So we saw a $1.35 increase over three years in an economy that was improved and where we are right now. The current bill is calling for a four dollar and 90 cent increase over four-and-a-half years, triple what we saw before and just a small amount of time more. So you can understand where a small business owner says, well geez I had my prices set for 2019 and this Bill is going to go into effect, what do I do now. No predictability with this Bill, very little predictability for our business owners across the State of Connecticut. No wonder why they are looking to relocate every day.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Another question for the proponent of the Bill. To the good Chair of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, to her knowledge has the minimum wage
bill ever been repealed in the United States of America?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I would ask that the good Representative repeat that question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Has there ever been a state that has increased the minimum wage and then subsequently repealed it?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Not to my knowledge.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

To my knowledge the State of New Hampshire raised the minimum wage and then subsequently repealed it back down to the Federal Minimum Wage which was, I believe, seven dollars and 35 cents per hours or thereabout. Why did they decrease the minimum wage? Because it was a job killer. You know when I think of that statement, repealing a law, I think of all the people that were told they we’re gonna get pain a higher rate and then the state government had to retract it because they realized that businesses were leaving. I wonder if this State legislature and my good friends on both sides of the aisle and this colleague in this Chamber are thinking the same thing. If we do this and we raised the minimum wage will we then have to repeal this law in a couple of years when we continue to lose jobs because the real goal here is to create more taxpayers not taxes. The goal is to
introduce more people into the workforce at a young age, train them, give them the skill set that they need and then have them keep going in their career and move above and beyond minimum wage. Minimum wage is a starting point. Minimum wage is not a living wage in the State of Connecticut. We know that. It is too expensive to live here on $15.00 dollars an hour. We aren’t lifting anyone out of poverty with $15 dollars an hour. You need to work two or three jobs to make a living wage in Connecticut because we are simply too expensive. So when business owners tell us, and job creators tell us we want to hire more people, we want to create the jobs for our youth, we want to start someone at $10.10 or $11.00 an hour and after a year of showing up and as my good friend, Representative Porter said, an honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay I 100 percent agree with her. We want to raise them above $11.00 dollars. We may want to give ‘em $20.00 dollars or $25.00 dollars or $30.00 dollars, and benefits and a 401k and healthcare. That is what a good company does. But when you tell them
and mandate them what they have to pay someone, they are going to think twice about making that hire. You know I’m fortunate enough to work in a family owned small business, trade business. Folks coming out of Kaynor Technical High School in Waterbury, great people, electrical apprentices. These kids that come out of school, and I wasn’t a kid too long ago, they are looking for jobs, they need work. A lot of times they are rooming with two or three other people just to pay their bills. We love to hire people. We love to hire apprentices. We have worker that has been with us for over 30 years and he started off as an apprentice. But he didn’t start at a high wage, he started at the minimum wage, proved himself, worked his way up the ladder and has become one of the most valuable people in our family owned business. Would we have taken that chance, it was before I was born, would we have taken that chance had the minimum wage been higher? Who knows? If the economy was good, well maybe. If the economy is not good, you know what maybe we don’t hire that electrical apprentice. Maybe we tell him, you know
what, you got to go get another job for right now because we’re just not hiring, can’t afford it, sorry. That is what my fear is with this Bill that business again, it’s not the large corporations, it is the mom and pop stores are gonna think twice about hiring a young or even 20, 30, 35-year-old worker at $15 dollars an hour. They may just do it themselves instead of hiring the gut to clean the shop or to input the data. They may take an extra hour at the end of the workday and do it themselves because they can’t afford that. And by the way it is not just the $15 dollars an hour, it’s the $15 dollars an hour, it’s the payroll matches and it is everything else that comes along with that. So it really costs the employer something like $25 dollars an hour to employee these folks. That is concerning.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Another question to the proponent of the Bill. During the Public Hearing testimony and debate on this Bill in the Labor and Public Employees Committee we heard quite a bit of talk and debate
about the consumer price index which was a piece of the original Bill which would ultimately increase this minimum wage above any beyond $15 dollars an hour.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Has that been taken out of this Amended Bill or is there another component in this Bill similar to the consumer price index which would increase this piece of legislation?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

There is an employment cost index.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you.

Mr. Speaker could the good proponent, Representative Porter please explain the employment
cost index. Again just receiving this piece of legislation so, employment cost index. Could the good proponent please explain that? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It was published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. It measures the true value of work by looking at wages, salaries and benefits.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Would this increase in minimum wage above and beyond $15 dollars an hour?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
That could be correct if there is an increase but it could be zero.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Could this increase go into effect without a vote from this body or the Connecticut State Legislature?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It will go into effect when we pass this Bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Mr. Speaker, thank you and thank you to the good proponent of the Bill for clearly stating that
this Bill will increase the minimum wage above and beyond $15 dollars an hour without a vote of the legislature. This is probably the most concerning thing that I’ve heard all night. The fact that we sit here, that we are elected by our constituents to make a decision on their behalf and are hands are tied forever because of this piece of legislation that says the minimum wage will increase above and beyond $15 dollars an hour without a vote from the Connecticut State Legislature. How irresponsible is it of us to vote for something that ties the hands of this body in the future? That is a problem. That is saying that the minimum wage could increase to $20 dollars an hour, $25 dollars an hour, $30 dollars an hour in the future. That is a big problem for job creators, for the small mom and pop stores and for everyone that I’ve listed throughout my time speaking this evening. They have no control over this. It is not even a campaign issue anymore. Don’t campaign on it because it is automatically going up folks. Don’t tell your constituents, “I’m gonna look out for small business” because you know
what? The increase is just in, it is already in the Bill, signed, sealed delivered, done. That is concerning to me and I would venture to guess it is going to be concerning to a lot of folks throughout the course of this evening into tomorrow morning.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And to the good proponent of the Bill, is there a fiscal note associated with this piece of legislation?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

There is.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Thank you.

And through you.

What is the fiscal note on this Bill?
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

OFA as estimated in the first year $4.4 million, in the second year $12.1 million.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

What universe of workers would this cover through the State of Connecticut?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It would cover state employees, higher ed and municipal.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Would this include money to reimburse municipalities now for the increase in minimum wage across the board?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No, it would not but we have put into this Amendment a measure for the greater impact of the teenagers that work in municipalities that are 16 and 17 years old. It has expanded the training wage from 200 hours to 90 days.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

So if I am understanding this correctly and the
good Chair could correct me if I am wrong, ultimately this is a massive unfunded mandate for municipalities across the State of Connecticut. Let me give you an example. You know, the Town of Watertown that I proudly represent the 68th House District is a beautiful community, lots of green acres. We have a beautiful public golf course. Guess what? The youth in the summer working, minimum wage to mow a lot of these courses, to mow the greens on the side of the road, the lifeguards, the summer camps. You know, I am concerned that we’re gonna be paying an 18-year-old, 19-year-old college kid who comes home from school in the summer $15 dollars an hour for summer camp for the kids that are gonna be playing kickball, doing arts and crafts, whatever. Does that make any sense? Really, does that make sense? It doesn’t make sense to me. The parents that I talk to in my district that are sending their kids and saying, put your application in at Park & Rec because we want you to work this summer. They don’t want their child to make $15 dollars an hour. They want their child to
get out of the house and work. Let’s be honest. They are not trying to get their kid out there to pay the electric bill on the house for the summer because he or she is home from college. They want their kid to go out that and become a productive member of society, learn how to save money, take the course to become a lifeguard, learn intrapersonal skills, work with our youth, peer ministry. These are the jobs that we’re gonna be affecting with this piece of legislation.

And to go back to the unfunded mandate piece, well now the local taxpayers are just gonna have to absorb this. What they’re gonna say is, okay guess what Town of Watertown, you need an increase of $200,000 dollars to your budget or we’re gonna start cutting programs across the board. Bye-bye to summer camp. No more mowing those nice grasses or we’re gonna have to find one person and pay him minimum wage and they are gonna be working brutally in the summer, long hours. This is an unfunded mandate on our municipalities folks. This about it. Go back to your town mayors, first selectmen, town
councils ask them how they feel about this piece of legislation. Ask them if they are in favor of it because last time we did this to the towns and cities across Connecticut with education, they came back here and they said, hey we can’t absorb this cost. It’s too much, too fast. That’s why this year we saw a phase in of different items such as the teacher pension. This Bill is getting us there so quickly that you’re gonna see local budgets increase drastically over the next year or two because they need to pay for this unfunded mandate.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

A question to the proponent of the Bill. Are there any exemptions in this piece of legislation?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Actually there is. The Restaurant Association actually has in the Bill where we have eliminated the tip credit for tip wage earners and there will
be on index on that. So when this goes into effect bartenders that are makin $8.23 will be making $8.23 cents. Service workers that are makin $6.38 will be making $6.38. They will not experience a wage increase nor an index which would give them pennies on the dollar as an increase and I would like to also state that summer camps are exempt. And as far as the municipalities and this bein a mandate on them that will cost, I would beg to differ with the good Representative. They expanded training wage actually saves municipalities money estimated at approximately $1,500 dollars per youth.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

While we’re talking about the training wage as I understand it in this Bill it is a 90-day trial.

Through you.

Is that correct to the good Representative?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

There is a 90-day training wage.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Can this be used more than once on an employee throughout the year or can it ever be used more than once?

Through you.

Or is it just one-time only for that person for life?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If the worker or the youth worked for 90 days, goes back to school, quits workin and comes back to work again, they will start the training wage at 90
days again.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

So if I am understanding this correctly, to the good Chair the municipalities could then pay their worker percentage of the minimum wage for 90 days and then the worker could come back let’s say over Christmas break and they can pay them, restart that 90 days?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Thank you. That’s refreshing. My question on exemptions really was geared towards the seasonal
part-time employees. These are the Lake Compounce, Quassy Amusement Park, tourist areas of our great beautiful State. Places that again often time employee youth but not necessarily 18, 17 and 16 year old’s but like a 21-year-old that is home from summer from college that is going to be working there.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is there any provision in this Bill as Amended that would exempt seasonal part-time workers from making the full $15 dollars an hour?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If there are 16 or 17 they would receive the subminimum wage.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):
So through you, Mr. Speaker.

If the worker was 20 years old, home from college, working at Lake Compounce as ride operator then this particular business would be paying that worker $15 dollars per hour to operate the ride?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If that individual is 18 or over that is correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

This bill gets us above the $10.10 mark this year ultimately creating less predictability, less scheduling for those that have already set their prices for the remainder of 2019. So not only will these businesses have to pay more money in payroll
they are going to have to absorb the cost which will get me to my next point because they didn’t have enough time to adjust their pay, excuse me, their fee that would ultimately give their workers more money, they would have to charge the consumer more money. They didn’t have enough time to do it because this Bill is takin effect, I believe, in October is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That’s the first pay increase?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Going back to our Committee hearing, we heard testimony. Wow! Somebody turned my mic up.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative We’re having trouble with the microphones here, we have been trying to finagle the system, sorry.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

I’m usually pretty loud, so I don’t even need a mic.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

I won’t disagree [Laughter].

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

We heard during the testimony a number of business owners come in, some of which actually spoke in favor, one of which spoke in favor of about increasing the minimum wage for his workers at his local store. And during that time I asked the question because I think it was a question on everyone’s mind, if you are gonna pay your workers more then you must have to charge the consumer more, correct? Well the answer was yes. It’s right in the testimony. I pay you more, I charge he or she more, him or her more. So what happens? It’s a
ripple effect folks. I pay my worker, my cashier $15 dollars an hour. I can’t sell you the sandwich, the bottle of water, the coffee for a $1.10 anymore. I have to charge you a $1.50 or $1.60 for that coffee or $6.00 dollars for that sandwich instead of $5.00, or I am going to eliminate the worker all together and just go automated and have one person bring that coffee out to you as an expeditor and pay them the minimum wage. So my point here is that a person headed to a grocery store, hypothetically now, let’s set the stage. I am a senior. I’m on a fixed income, okay. I don’t necessarily make a lot of money on Social Security, I’m a little over $800 or $900 dollars a month. I live in a decent sized apartment. I need to get on the highway to go shopping at a local supermarket. I need to go two exits up. Well guess what, I have to gas up my car. I’m payin some of the highest gas tax in the nation, okay. Strike one! I get on the highway to go to the supermarket; I have to pay a toll. Strike two! I get in the supermarket; I go there and try to buy some lunchmeat or a loaf of bread and I see this
price just went up 40 percent. No just because the trucker had to pay the toll to get in there to deliver the things but the worker’s making $15 dollars an hour or more to put it on the shelf. My little check that I get at the end of the month, guess what folks? That evaporates quickly, gone. So we’re talking about lifting people out of poverty yet we’re gonna raise taxes almost everywhere. I sat through Finance last week and listened to the budget. Tax increases all over the place and then couple this on top of it. What are we doing? What are we doing? Really. Has anyone consulted the small business community here? Hello! Has anyone said, maybe it is time to start thinkin about tightening our belt and cutting back? The answer is, “no” we haven’t. With that Mr. Speaker another question.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Just reading through this piece of legislation. This training wage that we talked about, on Line 51, “the rates for learners, beginners and all persons under the age of 18 except the emancipated minors.”
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What are, who are, who would classify as the exception of emancipated minors?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Emancipated minor would be someone who has taken on through a process, through the court, show responsibility for themselves releavin their parents of all parental rights and responsibilities.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So if I am understanding this correctly, a 17-year-old child who is living on their own, would then be exempt from this provision?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If that 17-year-old is an emancipated youth, that is correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

The idea, again, and I think the good Representative for the explanation here of emancipated youth, I am still trying to understand exactly to what that universe would apply and because of the that, I have another question. Would that apply then to an individual that is at college, not living in the house anymore, maybe dorms there for summer, is looking for a job as a ride operator at Lake Compounce is 17 years old.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If the 17-year-old is an emancipated youth, that is correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Emancipated through the courts. My question is then would this individual who goes to apply for a job, if they claim to be an emancipated youth, what document or proof would they have to show that they are not going to make less than minimum wage but are actually going to make the minimum wage?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I do not know the answer to that question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Then if an individual applied for a job and they said they were an emancipated youth and they didn’t live home, and they just simply were on their own and looking to make a maybe a second job or, you know, this was something that maybe it was their fulltime job, then how should the employer have some sort of proof, concrete evidence that this individual should make more than the percentage that is explained in this Bill?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter. Stand-at-ease.

The House will come back to order.

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That process is not a part of this Bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Thank you to the good Representative for the question. On Lines 56 to 57, it states clearly, “except an institutional program specifically exempted by the Commissioner.”

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Which programs are exempt by the Commissioner?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I just need to find the Line. What was the Line number again?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

To my good friend, Representative Porter, Lines 56 to 57.

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, one moment, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Of course.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

With the good Representative please repeat the question again?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

No problem, I know it’s late. It’s only getting later. In Lines 56 to 57, “except an institutional training programs specifically exempted by the Commissioner.” Which programs are specifically exempted by the Commissioner?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

Representative Porter.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That was existing language.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

I’m sorry could the good Representative repeat her answer?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That is existing language.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

So, through you Mr. Speaker.

Again my question here is that the existing language states, that, “an institutional training program exempted by the Commissioner” which programs
are exempted by the Commissioner?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Because it is not in this Bill language, I do not know.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Okay.

And through you Mr. Speaker.

Then if the good proponent does not know, then again this is a reason why we really should be halting the brakes on this piece of legislation. We are talking perhaps about exemption certain institutional training programs that we do not know. What universe of folks or workers across the State of Connecticut does this include? Is it going to effect our youth, is it going to effect the
middleclass? We don’t know, so there are a number of problems with this Bill and in Lines 56 to 57, clearly further my point. Another question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

In Line 153 of this Bill, there is a study of workers, looks like there is a study, that is gonna take place.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Who will conduct this study?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The DOL will have someone assigned to conduct the study.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

This study will exactly do what?

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

This study will study tip-wage workers and the impact that they have on the State.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

If we are, you know, at the point where we have heard from the Food Association, the Restaurant Association and restaurant owners across the State of Connecticut one of the fine industries that’s actually doing well in our State, why then would be give the Department of Labor another job to study something that we know is working fine?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DOL would actually hire a consultant and we do not know if everything is workin fine, that is why we have requested in this Bill language, as study.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLET TA (68TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The Department of Labor has been the topic of controversy, the auditors came out with a report in which it listed numerous deficiencies in their document for the Department of Labor. We are also taking about creating another agency, a $20 million dollar agency that would institute a new insurance program for families across the State of Connecticut that is going to go under the Department of Labor. Now we are gonna charge them to do a study or contract out with someone to do a study on an industry that is actually working and thriving across the State of Connecticut. Why we would do that is beyond my imagination. Why we would event think about giving the Department of Labor more work
when they can’t handle what they have clearly is beyond my imagination. You know, when I look at and listen to a report that came out by the State Auditory a couple of weeks ago and this Committee asked for a Public Hearing on those, a number of inefficiencies that were found in the Department of Labor, guess when that hearing happened. It never happened. I am deeply concerned about that is going on with the Department of Labor and when I got this paper and I saw that they are gonna be conducting a study it immediately set something off in my mind that said, woah why are we giving the Department of Labor more work, they can’t handle what they have. There is 18 or 19 problems there already. It has been well advertised in the media across the State of Connecticut that we need to fix the problem that’s broke that is the Department of Labor. All throughout that time we requested, let’s bring ‘em in, bring the Commissioner in, let’s talk about what’s wrong. Let’s try to wrong our rights. Let’s try to do what’s best for the State of Connecticut because the taxpayers are funding this department.
Nothing. No hearing, no talk about it, no press release nothing. And I regret to inform you there isn’t anything scheduled either.

When I think about this Bill I think about all of the impacts it is going to have. So in my time yesterday when I was told that we would be discussing the minimum wage Bill this evening, I did a little bit of research because I’m not going to standup here and ask my good colleague on the other side of the aisle a thousand more questions. I respect her and I respect her opinion. But I did want to formulate was my own opinion based on facts. Based on findings across the country of other states that have implemented the same policy and what has happened. I did the same thing with the Paid Family Medical Leave Bill and I’m sure that will come up for debate and we will talk about that as well. But when I looked into some of the negative effects that this has had, I’m gonna say I looked at a CNN Business article from 2018, CNN now, 2018 on Seattle and what happened with their minimum wage. When they raised their minimum wage they saw decreased
numbers in new workers entering the workforce. Think about that. Decreased numbers of new workers entering the workforce. What does that tell you? A business owner is not going to take the leap and hire someone if it is too expensive for them to do so. This isn’t made up and the folks that watch CNN that like it, take a look. I’m quoting it verbatim. We are going to head down that same road here in the State of Connecticut. Well we already actually are down that road but now we have a chance to take a fork in the road, if we’re gonna use this analogy and go in the direction that we have been saying for years and we need to finally create an environment that is conducive for job growth. Or we could take the other fork and keep going down that path, that long slippery slope of anti-job, anti-business legislation and this is what this Bill does. It gest us right there. Anti-job, anti-business.

Let’s talk about California. Right, we all love California so we’re gonna talk about it tonight. They are doing great financially, right? California is like awesome. A Trinity University Study shows
that California will lose, and granted they are a lot bigger than us, 400,000 jobs by the year 2022 as a result of $15 dollars an hour. Man, I hope we don’t lose 400,000 jobs here in Connecticut. We lost 1,300 last month and it was devastating, 400,000 could basically close us. More importantly guess what industry that this bill effected? It effected manufacturing. It effected the restaurant business. You know, when I see a stat like that I think to myself do we really want to go down that path, do we want to be California. No, I don’t want to be California I like Connecticut. I want to be here, four seasons, beautiful State, strategic location between New York City and Boston with the beautiful Connecticut shore. We should be doing everything we can to create jobs in this State to lift people out of poverty, put ‘em to work and then let that businessowner increase their rate. Look at what other states who have done this, look at where they are. Facts don’t lie. It’s not like I’m making this up, you can look them up on your own. We should be learning from other’s mistakes. I’m
sure there are people lookin at Connecticut right now saying, man I don’t want to do what they’re doin. So if we’re seeing a State that has been negatively affected by this piece of legislation we should learn from that state.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

A question for the proponent of the Bill.

And through you.

The proponent of the Bill mentioned before that this minimum wage was goin to lift folks out of poverty and, you know, become a living wage. Does the proponent of the Bill believe that this Bill?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative, no opinions, you can’t ask what she believes or what she thinks, you can ask question seeking information on the [cross-talking].

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Sure, I’ll rephrase it.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Does this Bill, when implemented in totality over four-and-a-half years, does this Bill present a living wage in the State of Connecticut?
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter, do you care to respond?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Does this Bill lift anyone out of poverty?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a vehicle to get there near.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.
What is a living wage in the State of Connecticut to the good proponent of the Bill?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Research data does show that single people living in the State of Connecticut $19.08 per hour is a livable wage.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Thank you to the good Chairman for her answer and that was the number I had somewhere around $19 dollars per hour.

So, through you, Mr. Speaker.

This Bill does not get us to a living wage in Connecticut and could ultimately negatively impact the job markets so then what to do if folks that are then making $15 dollars an hour still are not at the living wage, so they are still technically not where
we want them to be. So what then is the course of action?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

This gets them halfway there, $10.10 currently, $15 in 2023 leavin‘ em $4.08 short. We have indexed this with the ECI for that purpose, but predictability not just for the employee but for the employer as well.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Then if the living wage in Connecticut is $19 dollars an hour.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Then when would this Bill come into effect and actually get us to a living wage with that increase
as well?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I cannot predict that because there may be when there is a zero increase with the ECI.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):

Thank you and I was just going to correct myself and say that I was asking with the ECI could we potentially.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Get to $19 dollars an hour within the next decade?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
I cannot predict that.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Poletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH):
So in essence the point of this Bill as we heard over and over was to lift folks out of poverty, get them to a living wage in Connecticut. We heard that over and over in the Public Hearing testimony but we know that it is not true. This Bill does not lift anyone out of poverty. This Bill does not present a living wage in Connecticut. If anything this Bill will create less jobs and pass a lot of the cost onto the consumer i.e. the middleclass which is the backbone of this State.

So we talked this evening briefly about our seasonal part-time employers, we talked about our small businesses across the State of Connecticut but is anyone thinking about manufacturing. Wage compression an issue that is worrying the manufacturing industry across Connecticut. The folks that own manufacturing plants that already pay
their workers $15 dollars or $16 dollars an hour and pay their managers $20 dollars. Well guess what. They can’t continue to pay the same guy $15 dollars an hour, that is a “supervisor” when the person that is starting is gonna be making $15 dollars an hour. Ask yourself this question. Would you in your right mind oversee a person when you spent two, or three, or five years at an institution and they came in and they were makin the same amount of money as you? You worked hard, you took time away from your family, you became some sort of supervisor and got elevated to $16 dollars or $17 dollars an hour and now a 21-year-old kid comes in and just starts and is making $15 dollars an hour. Really? Ladies and gentlemen think about it. It just doesn’t make sense. We’ve heard it over and over. Wage compression is gonna result in higher prices across the State of Connecticut and less jobs. There is no way a business owner in his or her right mind, that is already paying top dollar to do business in the State of Connecticut, there is no way that individual is gonna say, let me bring 15 more people
on board at $15 dollars an hour and raise everybody else up. You’re making $15 now you’re makin $20. You’re making $20 now you’re making $25, you’re making $25 you make $30 dollars. It’s like an auction. Doesn’t make sense. Folks, listen to what people are saying. Minimum wage is a starting point. Minimum wage is a great way to get into he job market, prove yourself for six months or eight months and your employer will raise you up. I have the experience. I’ve seen it firsthand. The majority of small business owners across the State of Connecticut and I’m talkin those that have less than 25 employees are good, hardworking people. They don’t deserve to be punished again by this piece of legislation and they are. And we punish them over and over for the last eight years, nine years. They cannot absorb this increase. They are pleading with us, legislature please help us, doesn’t seem to be registering. We heard a lot this evening about how quick this rate will increase. Last time, if my notes serve me correct, the rate went up $1.35 cents over three years. We have folks that came into the
Public Hearing testimony and said no problem, it was slow gradual increase, we absorbed it, it gave us time to set our prices higher. It gave us time to adjust our workforce. Then we see a Bill that gets us to $15 dollars an hour over three years, raises it four dollars and 90 cents over three years. Thank goodness, a least something was done to spread it out over four and half years although I still think it is too quick but we’re still sending the wrong message across the State of Connecticut. This is gonna have a ripple effect and if I was up here preaching and saying all this negative rhetoric about this and we were gaining jobs every month and Connecticut had ad after ad in the paper for jobs then I would expect someone to say, you know what, Representative Poletta you’re wrong. We’re doing so good. We don’t have any debt. We’re advertising cashiers and other workers in newspapers at $25 dollars an hour like some states because there is a shortage of workers. But that is not the case in the State of Connecticut. We aren’t advertising any jobs. We are losing jobs. So why don’t we change
or course. We could do it right now with this Bill. We could say, we’re not gonna increase this right now. It’s not the right time. Let’s pan it out, let’s get our budget passed, let’s come back next year and say, hey we did really good in 2019, now let’s get a little increase. Let’s go, you know, up to $11 or $12 dollars. No one is saying that. It’s okay, let’s pile it all on and do it right now because, you know, we need to do it and that’s the right thing. In 2004 Oprah Winfrey had a great episode. If you guys remember this, okay I was young, she was standing in front and she had an audience full of people and she said, you guys are gonna open up an envelop and one person is gonna have a car. One person in the audience is gonna have a car, right? And I’m sure all of you guys have heard of this, it’s very famous. Well the people standing, everybody, you know, open up their envelope, they were so excited, she said one person is gonna win a car. Well the camera panned out, first person to open it, I have a car. The next person, I have a car, I have a car. So she went
around, you got a car, you got a car, everybody had a car. This is the same thing except replace car with tax. You get a tax, you get a tax, you get a tax, everybody gets a tax this year in Connecticut. Really, you could relive that same episode and replace the word car with tax [Laughter]. I don’t mean to be comical. I wish I was trying to be funny but I’m not. It’s the truth. We have to look in a new direction. We have a chance to do that by holding off on this Bill. Yes, this is gonna be a long debate and you guys are probably sick and tired of hear of me but I am gonna say with confidence that I know that we are gonna be back here talking about another deficit, we are gonna be talking about trying to adjust this again, maybe even down like New Hampshire did, because folks across Connecticut are not gonna benefit from this. It is too soon, too fast, too much. The small business community has come out in strong opposition to this. Governor Lamont is a business owner and he recognizes that we needed to spread it out over a longer period of time. And in that theory I agree with him. I think
we should have done a better job. I think we should have gotten this Bill as amended a little bit sooner than five minutes before the debate started. I would recommend that we take this Bill, stop the debate, take a look at what is in it, give folks a chance on both side of the aisle to bring their ideas to the table and renegotiate this piece of legislation because we are going to regret passing this this evening. It was not negotiated on both sides. I did not sit in any meeting to negotiate this piece of legislation which is why I am going to oppose it this evening and I hope my colleagues will join me. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

    The Distinguished Deputy Republican Leader, Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also obviously rise in opposition to this legislation. You know, I do remember a time when the discussion the minimum wage was a bipartisan discussion and typically Republicans would support minimum wage
increases and somewhere Connecticut took a turn and I think over the last couple of cycles we have opposed it, certainly not because we don’t think the people deserve a fair wage but I think we have continued to be concerned about the direction of the State of Connecticut has gone and the impact that employers are able to have in absorbing these increases. So one of the things I like about our Chamber is it is a part-time legislature. It is a citizen legislature were all of us have other jobs and bring different perspectives to the table and one of the things I sadly think our Labor Committee is lacking is the perspective of the business owners and this Bill to me is personal because it does affect me as an employer. It is probably the scariest piece of legislation that I have ever seen in the 13 years that I have served in this Chamber. More scary than the other minimum wage increase and I’ll explain why and having lived through it as an employer the last cycle of increases and being able to absorb those increases. I now realize my eyes are wide open and I’m truly concerned about the
impact this is gonna have. Not necessarily on my bottom line or my profits but the impact it is going to have on my workers because the last time we increased the minimum wage what ends up happening is that the people that aren’t earing a minimum wage they are actually earning the living wage, don’t get raises, they don’t get increases. But the minimum wage workers do. Now we’ve heard in some cases where there are individuals working two or three jobs to put their family, put food on the table for their families. But I have to venture to guess and from what I have observed there are industries where we have children or individuals working part-time to bring in a little bit of extra money or just because they enjoy it to give them something to do. Those are the individual that are also goin to be impacted by this. So my business as many of you know, I am in the entertainment industry with sports and recreation. We hire fulltime employees, they have full benefits, they have families, they have worked for me for years but there is also, we have minimum wage part-time employees and many of them are kids.
Their first jobs, we bring them into our business, it’s a lot of fun for them, we train them. The impact of this, what this is going to do for me, is I am going to have to lay-off some of my fulltime employees in order to be able to afford to carry my part-time workers who are working in unskilled positions but for our youth what they learn about showing up to a job on time, learning how to interact with customers is invaluable skills that they can have later on in life and I’ll talk about that impact a little bit later. But I also want to reference to everybody in this Chamber that the State of Connecticut in 2007 changed our youth employment laws because we wanted to make sure that employment wasn’t impacting our youth. And for those of you that were in the Chamber that passed those laws you might want to ask employers around the State how that is working out because first of all many of them don’t even understand the hurdles that they have to go through when you hire youth. But the ones that do are reluctant now to even hire our youth because there are so many hurdles. You
know, first off if you are going to hire somebody 16 to 17 year old’s the State of Connecticut now imposes working papers. So the student has to go to their school, have their superintendent sign-off on the piece of paper, which is a minuscule act, the employer has to collect that, and when I said minuscule act I am saying the employer or the superintendent doesn’t have a choice, they sign the document. So we’re just pushing paper. If the employer doesn’t have that document shockingly the Department of Labor fines them. Then we have restrictions on the hours that they can work and those restrictions, you know, seem reasonable. You don’t want a kid 16 or 17 years of age working more than eight hours in a given day and you don’t want them working more than 6 days in a calendar week, that makes sense. But all of these restrictions go through the summertime. So my business which is partly seasonal where it gets more busy in the summer, similar to Lake Compounce, you are not able to hire them for nine hours on a Friday in the middle of the summer. That is a labor violation.
So all of those I believe have impacted youth employment in the State of Connecticut. You know, and we talk about what are children are doing nowadays. We are fighting the issues with children being exposed to vaping, children being exposed to marijuana, children being exposed to smoking, they are hanging out in the streets, they don’t have things to do. They are on their I-phones. Well this very legislation that we passed in 2007, while it may have been well-intended, I will guarantee you reduced employment throughout the State of Connecticut. It got to the point in my business were my manager begged me stop hiring children 16 and 17 years of age because it was too difficult to try to follow these rules and continue to pay them. And my business is located in the community I live in. I know many of the families. I actually got a text about two hours ago from a friend of mine I graduated with that said, my son is looking for a job, can you hire him. And we do and we struggle to try to comply with those laws and make sure that we don’t step out of line because what happens the
Department of Labor comes in and they will whack you and I have experience with the Department of Labor audit. It’s not fun and inevitably you will see a fine. So I think first now what impact these wage increases are gonna have on youth employment. First off I could guarantee you that businesses are not going to be hiring these individuals in order to train them if they need to be paying $15 dollars an hour. So to our youth in the State of Connecticut if this gets passed into law, go find another state to go work in cause the State of Connecticut is closed to you. And I think this Bill while it attempted to address that issue of seasonal workers is really completely tone-deaf to the issue. You know, we talk about this 90 day exemption but if you flip through the Bill of course, cause we can never help ourselves in this Chamber, we had to add language here that, no employer may take any action to displace an employee including but not limited to a partial displacement of an employee such as reducing their hours, or their wages, or their blah, blah, blah and they will be in violation and
probably would get another fine from the Department of Labor. So do we really think that any employer is gonna risk hiring a youth under this 90 day exemption to get, to be able to pay 85 percent, is this a trade that is gonna work? I guarantee you it is not. It just isn’t. And so in my business the next thing that we’re faced with, and I will guarantee you I am not gonna be alone. It is going to be every retail business; it is how you make this work. So for my management structure which are fulltime employees and I will put this on the record, they are earing anywhere from $40,000 dollars and up with benefits because that is what employers do. You know, our employees part of our family. These individuals, you know, can work nine to five, a typical day, they go home to see their family and in today’s day and age as an employer, you deal with the situations that when somebody gets sick, a child gets sick, they need to go home and take care of them, somebody goes through a divorce inevitably. You know, I could tell you stories, after stories, after stories what we do for our
employees. Somebody need a loan to get out of a financial jam, they will turn to you and there are times that my employees are making more money than I’m making. I am not a wealthy guy and I break my back to operate my business and to stay in the State of Connecticut because it is not, you know, it’s not just in your blood, but you care about your community. You care about this State, you care about your employees. And what scares me about this Bill is what I am going to need to do when I get back home when this law is implemented because the first thing that is gonna happen is those fulltime employees are gonna have to absorb these wage increases. So they will probably have to move to nights because my operation where we are making our money is at night, so I am figuring that those individuals aren’t going to see their children, they are going to be work the three to ten shifts, they are going to be working the weekends and my managers that I normally pay around $15 dollars an hour who are part-time employees are going to be eliminated. And then I look at this and I’m thinking how do I
absorb my other staff and I am going to have to reduce labor in any area that I possibly could. I mean automation is an option but I am sure the environment is going to be different because as an employer as you walk into a room and you do this often especially in my environment of entertainment, you know, the high school kids or the college kids are sitting around talking to each other or will be on their cellphone. There is not going to be any room for that. Production is going to be a necessity. And so we are going to create an environment now where the stress levels are only going to increase. Anxiety levels are only gonna increase. You know, I remember we went on a business tour with another company that is in the agriculture industry, you know, they are a seasonal business and I went with some of our other Representatives and Senators in this Chamber and we were talking and the employer was talking about how concerned he is about being able to absorb this minimum wage Bill and the FMLA Bill. He pleaded with us, he talked about the benefits he gives his employees and I looked and him
and I just said, you know, when did the stress start for you. When did you really start feeling? I said was it 2008? He said absolutely. I said you never recovered from it did you and he said no, we’re still barely treading water. You know, so the difficult budget decisions that we’ve been making in this building for the last ten years, don’t think employers haven’t had to make those same decisions and for the businesses that are in manufacturing they can up and leave. They can find cheaper labor somewhere else throughout the country and for our brick and mortar, I don’t know what happens to our brick and mortar retail, our small quaint shops on the green, in our nice quaint communities that might be artisans selling their jewelry or their crafts or some other things. I don’t know how they survive this. You know, I went up to New Hampshire to visit my son and I think the minimum wage there is seven dollars an hour and this is another problem we have. I walked in the shop and the woman, we were just chatting and she apologized how scattered everything was around the place, it was taken her a little
while to wait on me and I just laughed, I said, don’t worry I own a business too, I understand. She said, Oh, thank God you understand, she said you understand the issue with labor then too. And she had told me a story she hired somebody for $37,000 dollars a year just to come in and work in her shop. She said I was stupid, I opened up another business, I’m stuck with a five year lease and I can’t afford to operate both shops because I can’t get the labor. And she said, you know what happened, I hired him for $37,000 dollars, I trained him, he promised me that we was going to stay and after ten weeks, he left. And she said I’m back to the drawing board. These are the things that this Bill doesn’t take into consideration. And so those individuals I think in those mom and pop shops, we’re gonna foreclose the ability for them to hire some extra part-time help cause $15 dollars is a lot of money and we’re not creating a living wage. I’m not sure what we’re doing with this piece of legislation. And I’ve always said I would love an analysis for how many people get hired a minimum wage and stay
there because I know that even in my own employment
one of my fulltime workers has been with me since he
was 16 years old, he started out at minimum wage.
Heck he went to college and came back after college
and he worked summer jobs with us and he realized,
you know, this is a great place to be and before you
know it he worked his way up and he is one of my
operations managers. But he also hasn’t seen a pay
increase in five years since the last time we did
minimum wage. The minute we passed that Bill last
time it was such a bump in the road for everybody
and people in this Chamber don’t realize that. The
larger companies they can absorb and a lot of them
aren’t paying minimum wage but are small businesses,
our mom and pops they have to figure out how, not
just to absorb this and stay out of the red but how
you can keep it going for everybody else. That is
what stresses me out about this Bill and I know I’m
gonna have to lay-off somebody who is very near and
dear to me and then after they are laid-off I’ve got
to figure out how I increase my profits to be able
to pay my high school and my college kids $15
dollars an hour and somehow pay my other workers who are the ones who have the families that need the living wages to get them the increases because guess what. IN the ten years or 20 years they’ve worked for me health insurance hasn’t gone down, taxes haven’t gone down and this is only gonna exacerbate the problem. When I first opened by business in 1998 I was rummaging through our materials and I found our first employee list and I think about 15 of the 20 employees were all family members because that is how we started out our business, that was the only way we could afford to operate. And it was a pretty neat moment looking at that and seeing all those individuals that helped build up that company and I remember when we were doing it, one of our biggest obstacles was electrical costs and it actually started getting me involved in politics because I was seeing what the State of Connecticut in the legislation that was being passed what we did to electricity and the horrible impact it had on manufacturing and our business community. And the first thing we did, we made a lot of changes to the
residential piece to try to fix it but we never really addressed the commercial side of it and we left them to their own devices to figure out and navigate through it. But that was a big cost that companies had to absorb. And now it is going to labor but what has compounded the labor which is so much worse is our tax structure. You know, every time there is a cause and effect to everything and I don’t feel like we’re looking that the big picture. And I really think we are tone deaf to all of this. So the struggles that we’ve done through our budget with trying to balance in the State of Connecticut and we’ve having the debate about teachers retirement and shifting those costs to towns and we always think of the property tax increases on our residents. You know, even this budges we’re talking about whether to expand or constrict the property tax credit but we still never had the conversations of the impact on the businesses. And property taxes are significant for companies and that’s a fixed cost. For my business we have to raise about $60,000 dollars just to pay the real property taxes
so before you even get out of the gate, that is a fixed cost you’re hit with. Insurance is staggering. I won’t even go into those details especially in the sports and leisure industry how much you pay for insurance and so you have to balance all those things and I think about now figuring out again, how you pay for college kids and high school kids that are pouring sodas, how the heck a business like mine absorbs these increases at the same time of paying my fulltime workers that are in this, you know, effectively hospitality industry but doesn’t have really a voice in this Chamber, it is not included in any of these carveouts. It’s devastating. And then I think to of the impact on just in my industry, you know, the baseball academies. They are all over the place. We have our local teams that frankly they filled a lot of our warehouses throughout the State of Connecticut but have been vacated because of the loss of manufacturing. And that has been a good repurposing of those buildings and I think we’ve seen studies now more and more and more people spending money on
recreation. I don’t know how those individuals absorb this. I mean I think a lot of them end up becoming sole-proprietors. This just isn’t a good economic engine for the State of Connecticut. And it scares me to death. And somehow we’re gonna figure it out and I know those fulltime employees that work for me, just like they did the last time around, they are going to be in this with me together and we’re gonna figure out how to navigate through it. But they know already their hours are gonna get longer, their shifts are gonna get worse, they pay is gonna stagnate for the benefit of I’m not sure what.

And I would also like to remark I think about the impact of what this minimum wage has on all the business that are up and down the street along us. When we first bought our business and built it, the retails shops all along our sections of Route 80 were really underdeveloped and we started seeing restaurants actually expand and go in all up and down that strip. People started advertising and talking about it and you see in our region the
hotels get used and I think, you know, a lot of
times we bring up, and I bring up my facility for a
reason because you talk to people and they say even
around this building, I’ve been there, you know,
I’ve seen it, I’ve brought my kids there. It’s had
a real good impact for that region. A Bill like
this doesn’t allow for that growth in the State of
Connecticut. I’m not sure you’ll ever see another
structure like mine be put in, in the State of
Connecticut but I’m sure they’ll be popping up in
places like New Hampshire because that wage
structure works. And then I want to finally end
with that one of the things we do in our business,
and this debate has come up in the Committee, but we
hire individual from the IDD community and I’ve
worked with different programs. I won’t
specifically name them but we’ve had job coaches
come in and when the last minimum wage cycle when
through it gets difficult and we don’t in our, in my
business, you know, we don’t take the sub wage, we
pay everybody a fair minimum wage regardless of
somebody’s ability. If I hire them I am going to
pay them that minimum wage. I can’t do it anymore and I think that’s what makes this Bill bad to me, because I won’t be hiring those people in that community without our developmentally disabled. They will lose positions. So I am not sure what this Bill really seeks to accomplish, I think it is unfortunate. I think with so many changes that we’ve seen in this State over the last ten years. For those of us that have been here for ten years through these budget cycles. I know none of us would say that things have gotten really better for us and it is difficult for me to comprehend that we are going to pass a Bill with a fiscal note of his magnitude for the State of Connecticut and yet when we look at other Bills that come out of maybe the Commerce Committee we make sure we strip every penny, we still try to keep it probusiness but we strip out any penny because we can’t afford it in the State of Connecticut.

And I think the last piece I want to touch on, this Bill doesn’t address and doesn’t talk about the people that are gonna lose their healthcare and lose
their State benefits as they earn more money when this goes into effect. I mean I guess that is where the State of Connecticut picks up the savings but I’m not sure if it really incentivizes anybody to go to work for $15 dollars an hour knowing that they may lose their healthcare as a result of it. I have to believe that people in this Chamber, I voted for the Bill that increased the wages, the hourly wages for our home healthcare industry and I figured $14.75 and hour for that Bill and thought we were doing a good thing. It made sense. And you must have heard from that community but they came back and said we can’t give them healthcare anymore and the are no longer eligible because they have the bumped up pay and I thought that was a really important issue that we needed to address before we went ahead and did anything else. But we’re not. We’re just gonna barrel ahead and champion $15 dollars an hour and we will see where it gets us. And I think what I find offensive in this legislation I know everybody is a little concerned with the fact that this might have a negative impact
on the State of Connecticut and if you’re not concerned read the articles that are coming out in New York City that are talking about the impact of the minimum wage on New York City which you would think a restaurant in New York would be able to thrive anywhere. I mean they can charge whatever they want, they have so many tourists coming in and out, people are gonna pay for a burger and they will pay $20 dollars. We’re finding out that’s not happening. New York City is struggling to be able to pay those salaries. So what do we do in this piece of legislation? After two consecutive quarters of negative growth in the State of Connecticut we are going to have the Commissioner of Labor report recommendations of whether or not to suspend these wage increases and then it’s gonna come back to us and we get to decide whether or not we should suspend and that to me is sort of bizarre language because first off Connecticut’s negative GDP growth, I think we are the only State in the country that has had negative GDP growth. That is not a good thing, not funny. So we could certainly
bet in the next two quarters we probably are going
to continue that negative growth. So what do we put
in as a trigger, well we’ll write a report and send
it to the legislature? And I think that is why I
find that provision so offensive because if we
really believe that two quarters of negative growth
is unacceptable there should be a stronger trigger
put in. We have to but we don’t.

So, Mr. Speaker I obviously I am standing in
opposition to this Bill. I am very concerned that
we are deciding to do something like this in the
State of Connecticut not because I want people to
earn a greater wage but because we don’t know what
this will bring for our future manufacturing. We
started to see an economic recovery, I thought. In
our bipartisan budget revenues are increasing but I
think this Bill isn’t gonna cut it, I think it is
going to overshadow our State and I am sorry we are
having this debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative
Lavielle.
REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good evening, still evening, not morning yet.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Yes still evening, thank you.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

You’re welcome. Thank you. So there is a context for all this and first off, I’d like to say we had the underlying Bill last week, last Thursday in Appropriations and at the time Senator Miner mentioned that even with all the testimony that came through the Labor Committee and all the emails that everyone has had and all of the talk with various organizations and businesses, that there was a lot of material to work with yet it had gotten out of the Labor Committee and then come to Appropriations with no changes at all, nothing had changed even after all of that input. So it got out of Appropriations that way and there was so much to discuss and the Appropriations Chairs were all so concerned about some sections of the Bill, yes that’s right there are many things to be discussed.
This isn’t the place to do it but we will have plenty of time to discuss this before it comes to the floor. And here we are today having gotten the Bill, the Amendment that just amended the Bill literally a few minutes before we came in to debate it. So I’ve had a little more time than Representative Poletta did just because there were two other people who spoke before me to look at it. But I would have liked us to have had more time to review everything and possibly talk together and it is an important subject. It is a very important subject because as we’ve talked about and we will see again this effects everybody in Connecticut even if you don’t earn minimum wage it affects you.

And so, let’s go to the context for a moment. Representative Candelora has just spoken to us about how he runs his business and it’s very interesting. Whenever we hear an outcry about wages or about legislation that affects workers, about how much employees are paid there is always sort of an implication that somewhere, somehow employees are at great risk of being disfavored, of not being paid
well enough, of not having the advantages they
should have because somewhere, somehow it is in the
nature of employers to oppress them and nothing,
nothing and I can tell you from my experience could
be farther from the truth. For several years I’d
never owned a business, but I was very involved in
the service industry in consulting for many, many
years. I worked for a large firm for a long time
and then I ran one for several years and we had an
expression, I talked about this in Appropriations,
but we had an expression then which was, when you’re
in the service business, where a lot of people, not
the particular business I was in, but nevertheless
in other sectors of the services work for minimum
wage. In the service business your assets go home
to sleep at night and what that means is if you
don’t have your employees and if they are not
performing and if they are not there, you have
nothing. Your business has nothing. So as an
employer people who are that important to your
business and also as a human being, let’s forget
that for a minute, as someone running a business you
do not want, in anyway, shape or form to undervalue, underpay, undercompensate, overwork those employees. You want them to perform. If they’re good you want them there all the time doing the very best they can and as they do better and better and as they stay longer and longer you want to pay them more. You don’t want them to leave and you want them to care about the business and know that the business values them. So the last thing you want to do is not to pay them well. And I remember it was very important to me that not only did I pay them well, but if somebody really outperformed I wanted to give them a bonus. I wanted them to know their work was valued. So the fact that businesses are having a hard time understanding why the minimum wage is supposed to go up and up and up and they are supposed to pay it has nothing to do with their wanting to stiff their employees. On the contrary. And if they do, they’re not gonna run a successful business I can promise you that. They have market competition, if they are not treating their employees well, if they can’t pay the minimum wage and if they can’t pay
higher wages and if they are mistreating their employees they are going to find something else to do somewhere else. So they’ve got market competition, both for talent and for wages and they are going to want to do as well as they can. So when they say this is a problem it is not for those reasons, it is because this is a serious financial constraint and it’s overhead and it becomes what we talk about all the time at the State level, it becomes a fixed cost and in this case, it becomes a fixed cost that grows and so along with the wages come the payroll taxes and the other expenses, sometimes benefits, sometimes not depending on the business but it is a fixed cost and in this Bill we are telling them that fixed costs will grow at a steady rate and soon at an unpredictable rate as well but we will get to that. And so with all this going on, these business owners who want to do very well by their employees because even if they didn’t want to they would have to in order to run their business well, do not have pockets that are infinitely deep. Money doesn’t grow on the
preverbal tree, it’s just not there. But with all of that said, when the economy is good and when things are going well, there is a place and a time and a way to raise the minimum wage there are very appropriate times to do it and it has been done. There has been a long history, I’ve got it all here, over the years of raising the minimum wage in Connecticut. We did it in 2014 and we’re just getting to the end of that now. These were all increases of something less than a dollar every time they happened. But there is a time and a place for it, it is not a never situation and there is definitely a way to do it. There are also a lot of ways not to do it.

So if we look at what is happening now according to this Bill yes there is a raise in wages for people who earn the minimum wage but there is also a knock-on effect everywhere you look. There is the providers who contract with the State and because the State funds them this costs the State and the taxpayers money. There are the employees of the State who make the minimum wage so those are all
State costs. There is a cost to the businesses that we talked about. Can they afford it? Is a new business coming into the State willing to pay the wage that we will set? There is also the possibility that this will effect, and you’ve heard about this already, a businesses ability to maintain the jobs it has and to create more or will it have to eliminate jobs, will it have to cut hours and will it be hurting the employees that it has because of this. There is the passage on to consumers of prices and costs. There is nursing homes, there’s summer camps. There’s town, municipal governments that employ people at minimum wage as well. There is family care providers and there is our community nonprofits. I had one lady come up to me who has a very prominent nonprofit, a very beloved one actually, that serves disabled people in my district and I said you got any thoughts on this and she said, “Yeah, we can raise the wage to whatever they want if the State helps us financially” but the problem is all those people who already make the minimum wage or just a little bit more and they have
skills and qualifications and training and they are wondering why suddenly people who were in the minimum wage make the same as they do and they are earning the minimum wage and they will leave and she is very, very concerned about that. But looking at those factors I have a few questions about the new fiscal note, which I’ve just seen, for the good Chair of the Labor Committee if I may, Mr. Speaker?

Thank you. So my first question is a very small one but I am looking at the fiscal note and on the front page there is the same sort of table that we had in the fiscal note of the underlying Bill or the former Bill and there are two rows, the first one says Various State Agencies and the second one says Various State Agencies. And in the last fiscal note we had there was a differentiation between those and I just wondered if the good Representative could tell me what that differentiation is, what is the difference between the two rows?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

There’s State employees, higher ed, Office of Early Childhood.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Which row would that be, Mr. Speaker? There is the first row and then the second row under agencies affected?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I’m just trying to get there. Page. It doesn’t say how it is stipulated. It just does mention various State Agencies and that is actually how it goes through on all three lines.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.
REPRESENTATIVE LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m just wondering in the prior fiscal note the first row had in parenthesis it had Various State Agencies, in parenthesis (Contracts). Those were the costs attached to the agencies with which the private providers with which various State agencies contract and the second row applied to various State agencies in parenthesis (Employees) those were direct employees of the State. Is that what these two rows are, is that a typo?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REPRESENTATIVE PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It is Human Services provide a contract, DAS contract and Office of Early Childhood collective bargaining.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REPRESENTATIVE LAVIELLE (143RD):
So then neither of these rows apply to direct employees of the State because that was the case in the first fiscal note, the second row?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That is State employees and higher ed. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. Very helpful. So if we go through this I see that those are listed in the text. We have the first section is Contract Impact of State Agencies, then we have Family Childcare Providers, then we skip a couple, we have State Employee Compensation Impact. So if the first line is those contracted services I know that in the budget that came out of the Appropriations Committee there was an allocation of $3 million dollars the first year to assist those providers and an allocation of $6
million dollars in the second year. I see that the first column is $2.8 but the second column is at least $7.5 million so that doesn’t seem to fit into the budget that was allocated in the Appropriations budget is that correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

So it doesn’t fit into the budget. We would have, it would have to be some other way to find that funding for fiscal year 21?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
The budget is still a work in progress.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

I see. Okay so that is not funded at the moment. And I note that, I’m sorry I’ve just seen this fiscal note for the first time if you will forgive me for just a second.

It looks as though the agency contracts, this is a bit confusing on page 2 it says that I guess these get added up with something else to total these figures, but in the Contracted State Agencies $1.2 million in fiscal 20, $3.9 million in fiscal 21, $7.9 in 22 and $17.3 million in 23 so that grows pretty substantially over the four-and-a-half year period of these planned increases. But that is correct right? Those are costs to the State that would have to be accounted for somehow in the budget going forward?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Okay, so it is quite a steep progression there. I also have a question; I don’t see anything in the fiscal note about this. Perhaps I’m mistaken. Earlier Representative Poletta and Representative Porter discussed the study by the Labor Department on the last page of the Bill lines 153-165 and I believe that the good Representative said that the Labor Commissioner would have to contract out for this study and analysis on tip-earners and so on. Is there any, I don’t see anything in the fiscal note about what that would cost, am I missing something?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It says they may contract out.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

So we don't know whether that, that is to be done it says effective from passage, so that would be something that would happen in the next budget year?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you.

Upon passage, yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Okay, so that is another unknown expense. I find that the, its an expensive proposition no matter how you look at it. There is as I said before, and as everyone before me has noted, there
is so many organizations and local governments and businesses and the State all of whom are effected in important ways particularly financial ways. Could I also ask the good Chair to elaborate a bit on the anticipated fiscal impact on municipal governments?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If the good gentlelady could tell me where she would like me to elaborate and on what?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Certainly. On the fiscal impact that is anticipated for municipal governments, what will they need to account for in their budgets going forward through the term of these minimum wage increases?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe that a large city would be about $800,000 to $1 million dollars, medium cities would be $400,000 to $600,000 dollars, small $100,000 to $300,000 dollars and small towns less than $50,000 dollars.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. I think there is a couple of things to note there, one is there is a lot of these, the reason this is here in the fiscal note is that a lot of municipalities do hire seasonal workers or young people on minimum wage often to work for short periods of time but to do work that they haven’t been able to get done otherwise. They may have to decrease those jobs, they may have to cut the hours, they may not be able to get the jobs done but in any
event, any substantial increase in expenditure leads to something Representative Candelora talked about which is an increase in property taxes which is inevitable. So again the knock on effect is vast. There is a huge ripple effect of all of this and again just something that we have to be aware of which brings me to the, some of the things that we’ve said about Connecticut and the situation where we find ourselves vis a vis the rest of the country and New England in particular. Given all of these factors and all of the various points of contact and impact for a substantial raise in the minimum wage it would be, it would be very reassuring to know that a thorough analysis on Connecticut’s situation had been done and the figure to aim for, for the minimum wage increase had been arrived at through that analysis that was particular to Connecticut, that didn’t have just a general sort of this is good for the country, it is good for us kind of view because some of the things that we’ve all read, we’ve all heard. A couple of them have been mentioned this evening, I’ll cite some examples.
Connecticut still hasn’t recovered from all the jobs lost in the recession; we are still at about 84 percent recovery. Our economy is still smaller than it was in 2005. Between 2007 and 2017 the U.S. Economy grew by 15.5 percent while the Connecticut GDP shrank by 9 percent. In 2018 Connecticut’s job growth was 0.6 percent. The United States and Massachusetts, a near neighbor, were both 1.8 percent and just this last couple of months, Connecticut lost 1,400 jobs. We need jobs. We need economic growth. We need businesses to want to be here so I think the idea of having a minimum wage increase especially calculated for Connecticut’s economic condition makes sense. We are a unique place, a uniquely wonderful place but also one that has its own financial situation that we got to take that into account and let’s just say right now it’s not booming. So I would like to ask, if I may, Mr. Speaker why we’ve been hearing about the figure $15 dollars ever since we voted in 2014 to introduce the goal of $10.10, so why was $15 dollars not more, not less, established as the goal? It seems to have
been established then and it seems to be the goal today.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Fifteen is actually what is going on nationally but I would say in addition to that that we considered what we heard from small businesses and businesses in this State because if we were truly trying to get people to a livable wage we would have increased the wage to at least $19.08. We landed on $15 dollars in consideration of many things and the good gentlelady keeps talkin about, you know, the economic growth in the State of Connecticut and how it has been stagnant but I would like to mention that economic growth is a product of wage growth and our wages have been stagnant for a very long time. We have not kept up with our surroundin states, we were a leader at one time when we went to $10.10, now if we look at the border states around us like
the good State of Massachusetts that you spoke
that’s doin economically well, they are at $12
dollars an hour on the way to a $15 dollar minimum
wage. Other states that have increased their
minimum wage are also doin well. California bein
one as mentioned by one of the Representatives
earlier. Wage growth equals economic growth and
until we catch up and stay on a level playin field
with the states around us, Connecticut will always
struggle when it comes to economic activity.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

I thank the Representative for that answer.
There is a work correlation in statistics which
means two factors seem to go together but it doesn’t
specify cause and effect and when business cannot
afford to pay a certain wage it is hard to see how
forcing them to do so will encourage growth if they
lose jobs in the process and if they lose hours in
the process. I would suggest that is actually the
other way around but that is a philosophical difference. When I asked the question in the Appropriations Committee, Senator Osten said to be very honestly, “Well, you know, $15 dollars was a national movement that has worked in many states” and I wondered if the good Representative could shed some more light on that national movement?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I can’t respond to somethin that Senator, the good Senator responded to.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Well, that is fair but it seems to have been sort of a, the implications, perhaps I am wrong was that it was the indication that something that was sort of general knowledge. I looked, I tried to
find something on a national movement for $15 dollar minimum wage that had been going on for some time. I found only one and I don’t want to suggest anything, I can only go by what I found. I found one that was initiated in 2012 called “Fight for Fifteen Dollars” which is run by the SEIU and it is national and they also call it global. This was the general goal of hitting that everywhere and I wondered if it was possible that there was any connection between that and the goal of $15 dollars?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

I am familiar with the Fight for Fifteen campaign.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):
Well my question just goes to and, you know, if the answer is yes, it’s fine and if it’s no it’s fine but whether in the aim for $15 dollars there was a connection with a national movement that is specific that was the main motive for picking that figure.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I will say that the Fight for Fifteen has been in his buildin and lobbying all of us.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I haven’t come across them, but if you say they’ve been here then I guess they have. Let me tell you why I mention that. There can be all kinds of reasons for choosing a number and, you know, if it’s something that can be
explained then it is legitimate. Well it’s one way of going about it and it’s something that we ought to know because we all need to assess whether we think the choice of a number is a good one and one that makes sense. I remain, you know, not all together certain if that is the case here but I have to say that given the specific factors of Connecticut’s unique situation I would think that our State deserves a very precise, well-articulate analytical solution for getting to that number and that it be disclosed to all of us so that we know what it is. Some of us may disagree with it, some of us may find it makes sense but we should be open about it and know what it is and I can’t help feeling because we’ve been talking about it for so long, and it came so suddenly after the vote on the $10.10 that the figure of $15 is kind of arbitrary and that rather than saying okay today it’s 2016, 2017 we need to raise the minimum wage what can we do now, we can kind of see, anticipate what is going to happen next year, how do know what is happening four years from now. We are not clairvoyant and
doing something about that and if we have to keep
doing it, keep doing it but instead it was sort of
like backing into it, finding a goal number and then
trying to sort out how many years we need to get to
it instead of, you know, this year we’ve got to get
to a forth or a sixth or whatever instead of saying,
this year we can go this far and next year we can go
another distance, and the next year we can go
another distance. Seems kind of backwards and kind
of arbitrary and it is not very clear for people out
there who are feeling the impact whether in a good
sense and that they are making more money or in a
sense that is more difficult to negotiate which is
difficult to navigate, which is having to pay for
it. So, I just, I find it arbitrary and that
concerns me.

The other thing I’d like to speak to is the
aspect of indexing and in the former Bill we had
from 2023 and I think in this Bill because the term
is extended a bit, I believe the indexing begins in
2024 and Mr. Speaker I have a couple of questions
here. So am in correct that once the $15 dollars is
reached and completed in June 2023 there is a moment when the Labor Commissioner has to announce there is going to be an indexing and when does that take effect?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

2024.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you but the determination is made shortly before that each year by the Labor Commissioner?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If the good lady could tell me that line she is lookin at in the Bill.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Yes, of course certainly. It is in the paragraph that begins with lines 25 through 34 so I think it would be lines 25 and 26.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes, on October 15, 2023 and each October 15th thereafter.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Okay so that is annually forevermore, am I correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Okay, I notice that the index to which the adjustment would be made is the Employment Cost Index. Who establishes the Employment Cost Index, who calculates it?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That is the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

And what is it exactly? What is it an index of, pardon me?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

It measures the.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It measures the true value of work based on wages, salaries and benefits.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. So could the good Representative explain to us the rationale for changing in the underlying Bill it was the Consumer Price Index for our region and here this is the Employment Cost Index which is, I guess that is two questions, is that national and what was the rationale for changing it?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It was actually somethin that was determined through negotiations with the Governor’s office.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Would the good Representative have any more information on what was behind the negotiations, why was the change made?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The ECI versus the CPI, the ECI actually has an incline of a much steadier rate than the CPI.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

So it was just a question of the progression of the rate or was there something about what it measures that made the difference?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
It was because of the progression.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

How then would we expect to see, what would be the change in fiscal impact by using the ECI? What would lead us to expect over the years?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

About two percent.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Would that be annually?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

And so the behavior of the index over time has that been a steady increase of two percent each year?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I would not say it has been a steady incline at times it can be zero.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Have we ever seen in recent memory, to her knowledge does the Representative know whether the ECI has ever decreased?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not, the ECI is just more of a stable indicator nationally.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. Related part of the Bill in lines 58 to 67 which I will come to in a minute, but I have a question first. So according to the part we just went over the ECI and the indexing this would happen automatically every year, am I correct, without any legislative action, it would simply happen that the minimum wage would be adjusted after the announcement of the Labor Commissioner that it would be adjusted, is that correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
That is correct but the legislature always has the option to come back and change legislation.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

But if the legislature does not act, then it happens, is that correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you. So now I’ll move on to the section I cited a minute ago lines 58 to 67. After two consecutive quarters of negative growth, if I am reading this correctly, the Labor Commissioner must recommend steps to the Governor, recommend. The Labor Commissioner has to report the negative growth
and suggest whether anything should be done in consequence, is that correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

And then after that, no action is necessary, correct? There is possibilities but no action is necessary?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Okay so that is really just a requirement to
the Labor Commissioner just to submit a report.
Okay, this is, for me, this indexing is of everything in the Bill which I am concerned about because it is increased in, well let’s say very larger ripple effect to all sectors of society in Connecticut when we are in a time of fiscal distress and when people need jobs and they need reliability and businesses need reliability to be able to take care of them. We also have a requirement in the Bill to take on increases in the minimum wage every year forevermore, literally forevermore, and the problem with the forevermore is, yes someone just said Edgar Allan Poe over here, actually that was nevermore [Laughter] that was The Raven, “Crows the raven, nevermore” this is forevermore. Literally lesson over. The problem with forevermore is that it is in the future and it goes on, and on, and on and we don’t know that Connecticut is gonna be like five years from now, I guess that is four years from now, five - five. We don’t know what Connecticut is gonna be like three years from now and everything in this Bill asks us because a we are not taking where
are we today and what can we do today, but we are
taking a goal figure of a four-and-a-half years, it
expects us to be clairvoyant over four-and-a-half
years and to make larger increases over each one of
those years than we’ve made in the past and then it
expects us to be clairvoyant forevermore to know
that we can do this, to ask everyone in Connecticut
somehow to make changes every single year
forevermore and that is what the indexing does. And
in fact what that does is something very similar to
what we’ve done in this State that we talk about all
the time that makes it so difficult for us to do the
things and pay for the things that we need to do, it
increases the fixed costs of the State, of
municipalities, of businesses and of everybody who
has to pay for practically anything in Connecticut.

So because of that and my concern over the
indexing section of this Bill, Mr. Speaker I have an
Amendment, which is LCO No. 8268 and I would like to
ask the Clerk to call the Amendment and that you
allow me to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
The Clerk is in possession of LCO No. 8268 which will be designated as House Amendment Schedule “B”. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

LCO No. 8268 designated House Amendment Schedule “B” being offered by Representatives Klarides, Candelora, O’Dea and Poletta.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The gentlewoman has asked for leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there any objection? Hearing none, Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So what this Amendment does is it takes subdivision (1) of section 1 of the Bill and actually it is not written this way but what it really does it strikes the last half of line 25 all the way through line 34 which is the section that has to do with indexing according to the Employment Cost Index.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

How would you like to move adoption?

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):
(Laughs] I would like to move adoption, Mr. Speaker and when the vote is taken I would like it to be taken by role.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Question is on adoption of House Amendment Schedule “B”. When I call for the vote it will be my role call. Representative Lavielle do you wish to continue?

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So this Amendment would simply remove the future indexing from 2024 on the basis of the Employment Cost Index because it ties the State and everyone else to fiscal obligations that the State and everyone else might not be able to honor, we can’t see that far ahead and we do not know what state this State will be in at that time. I think it creates a great deal of actually even though it sounds like it though it would be reliable, we don’t know what the index will do over that period of time and as I said before, it will put us in a situation of having to fix costs in the future that everyone including the State of
Connecticut will have to work around. And therefore I urge support of the Amendment. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, madam. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually the purpose of indexing is to give predictability to the employee and the employer and if we had indexed when we did $10.10 we may not be in this situation. We have had a wage freeze in essence and have not been able to keep up with the neighboring states in a way of competition, all the bordering states with the exception of New Hampshire who is at the Federal minimum wage level are on a track for $15, so it has not been arbitrarily decided on $15. There is a reason for why we are goin to $15. CBIA encourages us to be competitive, $15 an hour for a minimum wage makes us competitive and with that bein said, Mr. Speaker I would urge my members to vote no on this Amendment because I do not support it.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, ma’am. I have a little problem. Everybody is still on the board for the Bill not the Amendment and I need to know who wants to speak on the Amendment. Anyone? Standup, wave, Representative Davis. It’ll take us a minute we have to find you on the pew here to turn on your microphone. Is your microphone on, Representative Davis?

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Yes, it appears so, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Sure.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of the Amendment here before us. The Amendment strikes the indexing portion of the Bill and it is my understanding that in the underlying Bill this indexing would take place and the Department of Labor would make this determination certain points each year, I believe the underlying Bill calls for
it to happen on October 15th of each year. And then that would set the rate going forward for the next year for January first and we heard an argument against this Amendment that this indexing somehow does predictability but in fact I think it does the complete opposite because predictability would be knowing what that rate is year-in, year-out. You’re planning ahead, you know how many people you can hire, so on and so forth. That would be safer if it stayed at $10.10 an hour where we are right now, predictability next year you know it is $10.10 an hour. If it goes to indexing as proposed under the underlying Bill when we do the indexing it would be set on October 15th of that year. The business would then have until January first and then have to start paying that but that is unknown up until October 15th, it is not predictable. So if you are planning for more than one quarter ahead which I presume most businesses do, they don’t just do it fly by night and just say, hey I’m gonna start hiring people or I’m gonna start firing people they say, okay I want to know what my costs are going to
be going in the future. Well if you don’t know what that index is gonna be until October 15th and then you have to start paying it on January first I don’t find that to be very predictable whatsoever, more predictability would be set rates and then let the legislature pass a new rate with an effective date in the future if that was the case and have that open debate. By having it placed in statute that it just automatically takes effect on October 15th and then January first without any idea of what that rate is gonna be moving forward I think it actually leads to less predictability for the business owner and makes it even more difficult to be a business owner and more importantly an employer here in the State of Connecticut. So, Mr. Speaker I stand in support of the Amendment. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Case are you seeking? Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. This Amendment is such properly in front of us. We talk
about in the past few days about being disingenuous or disenfranchising to our constituents and to voters. This here is disenfranchising our constituents and the people who vote us here because we have no say on increases with this indexing. Once we have reached the $15 dollars an hour this body has no vote for what increases the minimum wage could be. What if the index stayed at zero for four years? Would we want to come in or are we able to come in and increase minimum wage if that is what we wanted to do or are we stuck with this indexing through infinity going on after $15 dollars an hour?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Could I ask the good proponent of the Amendment if she understands are we able to?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Are we able to if there is a zero increase in the indexing is there anyway of changing that so that the minimum wage can change to help people out if that is what we wish to do or are we stuck with the indexing that is in the Bill that we are looking to cutout?
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not advocating for keeping the indexing so I didn’t write the Bill but from what I understand, in the discussion is that the legislature can actually act whenever it wants however it is now tied to the indexing and I may be wrong, I am just surmising this from what I have been told, but if the legislature does not act and we’ve seen this happen many times particularly when we did not mandate a vote on State employee contracts for example, and we’ve seen proposals for doing things like this as we saw in the Bill on tolls, if the legislature does not act then whatever the index says is deemed approved and goes forward. I believe that is correct.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I believe your answer is what I was looking for and correct. I guess I just have to say we talked so much on disenfranchising the people of the State of
Connecticut, we are voted in here to listen to our constituents but we are looking at raising a minimum wage and then indexing it, the index could be anywhere from zero to 2.5 we’ve seen it to 2.6 without a vote of this body. We are here to vote on things to make this State better. I support this Amendment, let’s get rid of the indexing, let’s do our job, let’s come in here and let’s vote away whether it is up or it is down. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Anybody else on the House “B”? Give me a wave or stand up or. Representative Fishbein. It’s kind of awkward up here with this machine. Okay, we’ve got to find you. Go.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just so I understand about the Amendment, Mr. Speaker I just had a few questions for the proponent if I may?

If I was to vote for this Amendment would I be voting for the $15 dollar minimum wage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker. .
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

No, as I read it and as I proposed it, you would simply be voting to remove the indexing provision from the underlying Bill. You wouldn’t be voting for anything else in the rest of the Bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I notice in lines 16 through 20 culminating in line 20 that it does indicate that effective June 1, 2023 a minimum wage not less than $15 dollars per hour, so am I to understand that I would not be voting for that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Actually Mr. Speaker, I asked that question when I was handed the Amendment because I thought...
why couldn’t you just say strike these lines and I was told that this was the only way that you could amend and Amendment because at the time the Amendment was filed, this Amendment that we are talking about now it was amending House Amendment “A” to the Bill, it was amending the strike-all. So it had to address it this way. That is an LCO thing but the intent is certainly not to condone anything that remains in the section that is affected by this, the intent is to remove the language that has anything to do with indexing and the rest is not an expression of opinion on the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answer, perhaps procedurally I would have, you know, pushed to strike-all the language with a subsequent Amendment which restored the $15 dollar minimum wage therefor bifurcating the two issues but I look forward to the rest of the debate on this. I just can’t support the $15 dollar minimum wage reference
in this language. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

   Thank you, sir. Anyone else on House “B”?

Representative Ferraro. It will take us a second to find your name on the machine, there we go.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

   Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
   
   And through you, Mr. Speaker.
   
   May I ask a question to the Chairwoman of the Labor Committee please about the Amendment, sir?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

   Proceed.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

   Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

   And through you.

   To the Chairwoman of the Labor Committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

   Proceed.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

   My question has to do with how the index is read because I’ve been on the website for about 20 minutes now and I’ve been goin through the
historical index from 1995 through 2019 and the
index is done by industry, it is done by cost and it
is done by many, many different tables. How are
they going to arrive at the index cost per year
because I am having much difficulty finding an index
on a yearly basis anywhere near the two percent,
most of it is three or four percent and in some
cases even higher, so could the gentle Chairwoman
please explain to me how the index would be used?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not an expert on how that is used but I do
know that the ECI is quarterly.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Ferraro.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as I look at the
quarterly rates again it is done by industry so am I
to guess that each industry would be treated separately with regards to how the EPI index would be indexed to a particular employer?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What I can say is the employment cost index is published by the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, it is quarterly measured and the change of cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs to employee benefits. The wage and salary series and the benefit cost series provide the change for two components of compensation. It is designated as a principal economic indicator. It is also the only measure of labor costs that treats wages and salaries, total compensation consistently and provides regular, subseries by occupation, industry and region. The
ECI is used by the Federal Reserve Board to monitor the effects of fiscal and monetary policies and formulate those policies according to the Federal Reserve Board Chairman, Ben Bernanke, well he is not the Chairman anymore, but the ECI is indispensable to understand America’s economy. It ensure the accuracy of the statistics on employers compensation costs that we rely on for economic policy making and successful business planning.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Ferraro.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker [Laughs] and I certainly appreciate the gentlewoman’s reading of the definition of the EPI but my question is whether or not the EPI will be calculated by industry when the employer is being required to increase his minimum wage, will we have a single minimum wage increase across the board or will each industry have a separate cost of living or wage increase based on the EPI.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The ECI and I would say to the good gentleman that I think that would be a question better posed to the Department of Labor.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Ferraro.

REP. FERRARO (117TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the gentlelady for her answer. When I compare the CPI index which I am very familiar with as a business owner who owns real estate and most of my leases are tied to CPI Index increases it is a much simpler index to follow by and it is an easy calculation to make but this seems to be extremely complicated. I can’t really make heads or tails how it would be indexed to each industry or each employer and for that reason I stand in strong support of this
Amendment. I think this indexing is very unpredictable and is going to put the State of Connecticut in a situation where they are not going to be able to predict with any degree of certainty what the increases would be after we reach the $15 dollars an hour wage, minimum wage increase. So for that reason I stand in support of the Amendment and I ask my colleagues to support the Amendment as well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Anyone else? If not Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? If all the members have voted the machine
will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Mr. Clerk kindly announce the tally.

CLERK:

LCO No. 8268 designated House “B”

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DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Amendment is not adopted [Gavel]. Will you remark on House 5004 as amended? Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, unfortunately I feel that it’s a shame that with the acceptance of this concept of indexing we really are condemning the State to a future, a forevermore, of action that takes place without the participation of this legislative body. Yes I know it can act, but we’ve seen in the past that when things are deemed approved that is
essentially what happens, they go forward and it is
a lot easier not to have anybody’s vote on record
for something then to have them commit so the
legislature is essentially abdicates its role in
determining something as important as the minimum
wage every year forevermore from 2024. On top of
that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

   Excuse me, Representative Lavielle. Excuse me.


REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

   Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I
appreciate it. On top of that, we are in the name
of reliability and predictability asking businesses
and the State both of which have to plan and
providers, all of which have to plan every year for
their budgets to do so before the impact of an index
has been determined because we don’t know what the
index is. There is a delay, there is no time and
all in all I don’t find that this provides
predictability or reliability except knowing that
things will go up and it simply takes control of our
destiny out of the hand of the peoples elected representatives. It isn’t something I like to see ever a deemed approved for provision is not something I like to see, ever. And because this is so important, this is the minimum wage, it is a wage that is essential to those who earn it however much it is. And I talked a lot about money and affordability and businesses and other organizations being able to pay for this. That sounds dry. It sounds all about money when in fact we are talking about money. I am here, you know, from the Appropriations Committee, we’ve got to talk about money and we’ve got to face reality because in order to allow people to have better lives and to give them opportunities to improve and to earn more, to move up, to be active participants in the employed world we’ve got to be able to afford every cent they are paid and to keep jobs going and growing while we do it. And that all stems from a human motive but unfortunately it must rely on financial resources being available and somehow we must strike a balance between what people need and can help them and what
businesses and the State and taxpayers and private providers can afford. I don’t think this Bill does that, I’m sorry that it takes so much on so far in advance and it is somewhat arbitrary. Therefore I will not be supporting the Bill this evening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, ma’am. Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good morning.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Good morning.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

I have a few comments which will lead to a couple of questions if I may?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Of course.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Thank you. In recent years, our State has spent millions of dollars on promoting tourism in our State which leads to additional revenue and also leads to jobs. And as a matter of fact in the past
the most recent report by the Office of State Tourism, which was 2017 I believe, it generated $2.2 billion dollars in tax revenues including $960 million in State and local taxes as well as 84,254 jobs directly supported by tourism with both direct and indirect jobs is 123,500 so it is a significant number. It is important enough to our economy that even the Speaker set up a Blue Ribbon Panel on Tourism, they presented their first report this year and there is a Tourism Caucus in the legislature. I’ve been a member of that since it first started a few years ago. Tourism has a multiplier effect on our economy and I will get to my point really into the Bill very shortly. The multiplier effect on our economy where if we spend a dollar we generally get three to four dollars back so it is very important to it. Now our State has some really good, exciting, big attractions. Things like Mystic Seaport, the Casinos, Twain House so these are the more popular ones we know but what really is the lifeblood of a lot of our State’s tourism are some of the smaller attractions as well as some of the
smaller businesses that actually work with tourism. Examples of this could be we have an antiques trail in this State. We have a winery trail; I believe we have a brewery trail at this point I did not check that out on the State website. We’ve got restaurants, we’ve got clam shacks, we’ve got all sorts of ice cream stands and small specialty shops. Craft shops, bate shops, bakeries, a whole variety of different things and all of these are small businesses related to tourism. We even have actually Agra tourism as well where we have farms that attract people, farmer’s markets so this is, any of the hospitality related small businesses do generate tax dollars for our economy. But the important thing is these are small businesses. A lot of these are businesses that get by on a shoestring. They attract visitors not only to their own businesses but also to their communities. If you have somebody go visit a bakery at a given town, they may stop in that town buy gas, buy groceries so there is a lot more than just dealing with that one establishment.
Mr. Speaker what we are doing to our small businesses including these tourism businesses, we’re killing them. WE are not only just killing them with proposals like this but we are asking even more every year from these businesses. We are continuing to tax them on a regular basis. Under current budget proposals we are asking an additional one percent on restaurant taxes, we are starting to tax takeout food which a lot of these businesses provide. We are adding additional tax on lodging. We are adding tolls. We’re actually adding under the current proposals paid family leave and we are adding now, an additional wage, a minimum wage that some of them won’t be able to sustain. And this wage is actually increasing almost 50 percent over a short number of years. These small hospitality businesses employ a lot of people in this State. Some of these are seasonal workers and some may be teenagers in their first jobs, others may be older people who are reentering the workforce and after maybe a period of nonparticipation. Mr. Speaker, this leads to a question to the proponent of the Bill please.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

If you have, if somebody wants to hire a college student to say just something like scoop ice cream for the summer, one of our tourism related businesses, will they be eligible for the youth wage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It they are 16 or 17 years old, yes they will.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Thank you for that answer. What happens when they turn 18 years old even though they may be new to the workforce or if they are returning college student who happens to be 19, would they be eligible
for this new category of wage and is included in this legislation?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If they are 18 or over they would be eligible for a regular wage, not the sub-wage that the good gentlewoman referred to with the 16 and 17 year old’s.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

And thank you the gentlewoman for that. How was that wage and that limit, the under 18 limit, how was that arrived at?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
I would ask the good gentlelady to be more clear with that, I’m not quite understandin what she’s askin.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Zawistowski, let’s try again.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Yes, let me restate that. The current wage is, the youth wage is available according to the good Representative to people under the age of 18. How was that cut-off age arrived at?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Mr. Speaker that has always been the case with the subminimum wage.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

And thank you for that. Under current statute
there is a temporary or beginner wage that actually does not, excuse me one second, [asking for documents]. I had these on my computer and so I just need to get a hard copy.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

I understand. [Laughs]

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

You can only have so many tabs open Mr. Speaker before things start crashing.

There is a beginner wage, this comes from an OLR report, beginner wages are for new employees in the mercantile industry which will be wholesale or retail and it is not limited by age, it is meant to be a temporary wage and beginners over the age of 18 there is a restriction and there is, you know, it’s basically a learning wage that is not age restricted. I would like the proponent of the Bill why that was limited in this current proposal?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter. Representative Porter, I think we put on your microphone.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, I appreciate that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That was eliminated do the expansion that we made with the trainin wage, expandin it to 90 days for 16 and 17 year old’s.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

Thank you for that. Mr. Speaker, the current minimum wage law does include people under 18 and it is for the first 200 hours of employment. Is the 90 days expected to include more than 200 hours of employment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you,

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, that is correct. The 200 hours was under
the old statute, well I should say the current statute, this Bill language is expanding that training wage, training hours from 200 to 90 days.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST):

And thank you for that answer, Representative. We seem to have may be a lost opportunity here. By restricting a training wage to just 16 or 17 or younger we are losing the opportunity to have 18 year-olds, 19 year-olds enter the workforce and also older people who might be reentering the workforce after a long period of time. This might even include retirees who are new to wholesale or retail trade that may be looking to supplement their fixed income. I just think we have a lost opportunity which is hurting our business. Some of the small businesses that are referred to for tourism, they are not going to be able to sustain that high an increase in wage growth in that short a period of time. I’m concerned that they are going to possibly
shorten hours, lay-off people and possibly close. It is not just the small businesses that might suffer we are also talking about some of the smaller historical attractions maybe some of the smaller historical museums which even though they by staffed primarily by volunteers occasionally do have to hire people and these are the type of attractions that get people out there to see what they have and also attract more people to the communities in which they are located. For example, I actually represent a border town the Town of Suffield which is right on the Massachusetts border and I know there is more than one business, hospitality related that is really considering moving, but what happens when you move one of these businesses across the border and they have a following, people will go and this is routine going across the border to Massachusetts for things that are a little bit cheaper like gas, like alcohol and when they are up there they are buying their groceries, they are doing other shopping. I am really concerned that if some of these businesses close that we are going to lose some of the ability
to generate more related dollars from them. You know, these are the heart of our community. These are small, small business, craft shops, candy shops, there is all kinds of small businesses that this is just really going to hurt and we start losing these businesses, we start losing some of the charm that really becomes our State. You know, this Bill puts a lot of the small businesses at risk. This is just, it is just another nail in the coffin for some of the businesses that are barely hanging in now. You know, I’ve really seen, I really have some concerns about survival of these small businesses which really encourage tourism. You know, with our State’s renewed emphasis on tourism I am really afraid that we are going to lose some of the momentum. You know, really the businesses are the heart and soul of our State, it is really what makes Connecticut and brings people here. And you know, we’re just pushing these businesses too far. I will be opposing this Bill, I hope my colleagues with consider doing the same and Mr. Speaker, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Good morning and thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. During my nine years here, I think we found some very common ground in how to get out the dilemma we are in right now and one of those common grounds was the value and importance of small businesses. The more successful they would be the better we would be. Many of you, many of us have agreed that the small businesses are the engine, the economy, the backbone of this state and we have a lot of them. It is always been the belief conveyed by the majority of the people here that if they are successful we will be able to overcome some of these deficits, they will be able to generate more revenue which will help the State in terms of raising sufficient money to be able to pay for our operating expenses. In that spirit, a member in 2016 after the second round of tax increases, this General Assembly established a commission to say, whoa we’ve earned a reputation for many, many years of being a very antibusiness, anti-job creating State and that
is something we have to change if we are going to make more jobs and get people job opportunities in the State, and there was a lot of pressure on the legislature after that second round of tax increases and I remember that commission meeting on the spending side and the revenue side for many, many hours many, many weeks but people were determined to find out what we needed to do to help the businesses because they are the ones that are creating the jobs and creating the wealth. Remember, we stated that we cared about ‘em, we need ‘em and we are going to do whatever we can to change our reputation and show that Connecticut is a place where business should operate and want to be and grow. I would like, one of the questions I would like to ask the proponent of this Bill, to the good Chairlady of the Labor Committee could you tell me madam, will this Bill lead or create any jobs in the State of Connecticut? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That would be hypothetical on my part but I dare venture to say that it would. I believe that we keep talkin about this economic growth and activity and as I’ve said before and I’ll say again, wage growth equals economic growth. You put disposable income into the pockets of consumers who are actually the ones that grow business and grow the economy not businesses, consumers grow the economy. So yes, I would venture to say that and I would also like to say that small business actually received a 20 percent tax cut from the Federal Government and that was supposed to trickle down, it did not come down to the employees. These employees are still waiting on a wage increase and we’re talkin about low wage workers in the State of Connecticut that are strugglin day to day to meet their basic needs. We’re talkin about families and single mothers and especially women of color who of over half the low wage population that we’re tryin to address in this Bill who do not have the means to make ends meet without havin to work two, three and
four jobs and I think that is unnecessary in a state like Connecticut that has a tremendous income inequality problem.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you and I respect the passion and fervor of the good Chairlady but along that line is it not true that the private sector or the small businesses are in fact the ones who are doing the hiring of employees in this State or am I misunderstanding who does the hiring and does the payment of salaries to employee who do work?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you. I would say that small businesses are the drivers of economy and they actually hire the majority of the workers in this State.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you very much and I totally agree with the Co-Chair of the Labor Committee about that and in that spirit I went and asked, I thank you, I am not going to ask any questions for the moment, for a while so I just wanted to have the good Chairlady take a break.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

I went and called some people in my district to find out what the impact of this Bill would have on their ability to be able to operate were it to be passed and one of the one I called, I called several today but I’m only just gonna talk about this one organization because it is in many other communities throughout the State with the Bristol Boys and Girls Club and one of the things we all try to do is we try to understand is we are advocating for the
passage of something that we certainly believe in like Representative Porter, and we also want to make sure people are employed and well paid is to understand what the consequences of the proposal is going to be. They are the ones who are going to be impacted by the passage of this Bill so it only seems right and fair to see if our understanding is going to be correct or if it has some unintended consequences. So with the lead of the Chamber I think it is important because it not only is in many of your communities but this organization hires a lot of different people on a seasonal basis. So this is what the response was and I dare say many of you will probably have heard something similar to this should this legislation pass, says, "Representative Betts I am writing to you regarding the current proposed legislation increasing the minimum rate to $15 dollars per hour. I understand the need for wage increase of some specific amount yet I want to make sure that all of you as legislators have a cognitive and empathetic awareness of the impact such legislation will have
on not for profit youth service agencies such as the Bristol Boys and Girls Club. Currently we have 12 sites that provide service for up to 1,000 children a day. Annually we serve 40,000 children from our city, from towns and cities around the area and we have 142 employees who provide direct services to the children, 117 earn less than that $15 dollars per hour. In order for this organization that is doing all this work, to bring all the employees up to $15 dollars per hour and to provide equal increases to those who are currently earning more than $15 dollars per hour we will need an additional $650,000 dollars in new revenue.” So let me repeat that, in order to be able to meet this requirement the Executive Director here says we’re gonna have to raise, they are going to have to raise $650,000 dollars in new revenues. “The need for such a large increase in revenue is a formidable challenge that can have a devastating impact on children, employees. Here’s what the options are to get that $650,000 dollars. One, the cost of service will have to increase potentially out of the price range
of many low income families and we all know how important that is to those families. Two, we will serve fewer families so where will they turn for youth centered services. Three, we could have to cut staff to decrease costs but cutting staff will make us unable to provide services. Yes employees will have much higher wages but be aware that meeting the cost of these wages easily can result in increasing the cost of services to a point that families can’t afford to participate. We may have to cut programs to decrease our costs again elimination of services, cutting programs equates to cutting jobs. Yes, some employees will have better wages but many other employees could lose their jobs.”

I sit here thinking about this and I would like to ask the good Chairlady if she is available having heard this and having heard the personal story of Representative Candelora and his business as a business owner for which I have not had the experience that they have gone through, I wonder if the good Chairlady could respond to what they have said the impact of this proposed legislation would
have on their businesses and the options that they would be reluctant to have to do, what is your reaction and recommendations to them should this legislation pass through?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

I’m having trouble understanding the question Representative Betts, could you help me out?

REP. BETTS (78TH):

I would be happy to, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the good Chairlady could respond to what she has heard from Representative Candelora and from what I just read by these business owners and business managers to this legislation were it to pass?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to say that would be based on presumption and I would like to add to the stories that have been told in the Chamber around small businesses, the small
businesses in my district that I have actually spoken to and have come to my coffee conversations have told me not only do they support this Bill and the paid family medical leave Bill they believe that it has to be done. There is not an option and that they will see a way through like we all do when we have things that we are challenged with in meeting a budget whether it be household or business.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you very much. And I have no further questions but I do have a few comments. Like they who are meeting challenges the business owners here I think are telling us that given what the State is doing and telling them what to do with their money, not our money, but their money, and with their businesses plan and with their raising additional obstacles to their ability to try and help their employees as well as provide very important services that benefit everybody particularly the youth,
everybody here in the State particularly low income families, I am not sure this is really the direction we want to follow because if I am reading and hearing this correctly my interpretation is that we are making it, not only more difficult for them to do it, but they are saying like for example the Boys and Girls Club, they are nonprofit. Anybody who has been familiar with them, the idea of raising $650,000 dollars in new revenues is quite a challenge, quite a challenge and I seriously doubt that they can raise that all at once so the only other options they have to take a look at are the expenses and by adopting what we are doing here now, we are driving up their expenses through no fault of their own and impeding their ability to meet their mission. We also do it for other areas. If you think about it, for seasonal jobs a lot of people, youth are hired for example to work in parks, in ski resorts, at beaches and many other areas for the purpose of being able to earn some money, provide important services that benefit all of us. I really wonder if we will be a better State in giving job
opportunities if we go down this road. Yes people need to earn more money and in fact they need to earn more than $15 dollars an hour but is this the way to do it in light of what we’ve been told by Representative Candelora, what we’ve been hearing here 10 hours of Public Hearing testimony, are we listening? Do we understand or believe what people are saying to us when we’ve invited them to come to the table and tell us what the impact will have on their ability to provide services that frankly many of us use and appreciate and certainly for the employees?

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker I would ask that the Clerk to please call LCO No. 8259 and I be allowed to summarize, LCO 8259. 

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Clerk is in possession of LCO No. 8259 which will be designated as House Amendment Schedule “C”. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “C” LCO No. 8259 offered by Representative Klarides, Representative
Candelora, Representative O’Dea and Representative Polletta.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Chairman has asked to leave the Chamber to summarize. Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, this Amendment exempts seasonal workers from the minimum wage increases established in the underlying Bill and as a result this could result according to OFA potential savings to State municipalities to the extent that their minimum wage workers are seasonal employees. Mr. Speaker, I move for adoption and that when, and this be taken by roll call vote.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Question is on adoption of House Amendment Schedule “C”. I will order a roll call vote. Would you like to remark Representative Betts?

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Yes, thank you very much. You’ve heard from many speakers before me the value and the benefit of
seasonal workers and we know how seasonal workers are important to his local economy. To me this is just a common sense thing that is really responsive to what we heard at Public Hearings to what we have heard tonight and I think it is something that will be important to show people that we’ve heard what they’ve said that we want to try and work together to meet both goals and that is the reason why I urge adoption and I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the thought and the sentiment behind the Amendment but I would also like to say that seasonal workers often times are the young folks that have actually been given a subminimum wage in this Bill 16 and 17 year old’s with an expanded training wage for 90 days which actually works out to save employers for fulltime workers approximately $1,500 dollars and for part-time employees it would save employers a little over $500 dollars so I think we have taken
things into consideration to address the impact on municipalities in this Bill and I would urge my colleagues to please vote no on this as I do not support this Amendment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, madam. Do you care to remark further, again I’ve got the problem of the machine not being available so please standup and hold your microphone or wave or something? For the second time, Representative Betts. It takes us a minute to locate.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and I thank the good lady for her comments. I do want to point out the seasonal workers are not limited to just youth. It is also for elderly and Veterans as well so I don’t want people to think we are just focused totally on the youth; some retired people end up doing seasonal jobs as well to earn some monies so this is not limited to just the youth and again I thank you so much for the opportunity to respond.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule “C”? Representative Bolinsky. No?

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Not quite sure how to take that [Laughter].

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Only in the best way [Laughter].

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Obviously you were pointing out that we are two distinguished looking individuals.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

No question about it.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

To the proponent of the Amendment.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

I’ve heard from a number of farmers and the
faming community and they look at this proposal as a dire consequence to them because farming is really an endangered profession and business in the State of Connecticut and to the proponent I am wondering if he has heard the same thing?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Betts, do you want a repeat? Representative Delnicki could you please repeat the question?

REP. BETTS (78TH):

With pleasure, Mr. Speaker. I’ve heard from a number of folks in the farming community, South Windsor is fortunate we’ve got a substantial farming community there along Old Main Street and they want to stay in business, they want to continue to farm the land that had made South Windsor the fantastic place it was to settle there in the early centuries of Connecticut. And my question to the proponent is whether he has heard the same level of concern that I have heard from the farming community and that concern being that changes in the minimum wage could
basically put them out of business and truly make farming an endangered profession and a profession that quit frankly could easily disappear from the face of Connecticut which is the last thing I think any of use would want to see?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you very much and I appreciate the question although I would say an equally bigger challenge for farmers is the weather and one of the reasons why I happen to be pretty familiar with this is our family owns a farm and we have struggled mightily with the issue of labor; we are a very small farm but I can tell you there is some very good ties to farms in your area and other areas. We’ve often gone to the farmer’s market and exchanged stories and one of the most common ones we have is one finding labor, two finding dependable labor that is willing to do the hard physical work that is required and it is something that virtually
most farms have difficulty within this State. There are many farms that in fact will hire people from outside the State to do that work and frankly it is only the big farms that can do it but I can assure you small farms are on the decline and a lot of the people that own the small farms have gotten older, their families are not willing to continue doing the business primarily for financial reasons and also the labor market is extremely hard to find and you must have good hard, dependable workers and there is not a huge supply that, at least in Connecticut, cause there are other professions that many other youth would rather pursue understandably given the finances of other opportunities versus in farming. So yes, farming is clearly challenged and is always going to be hurt by the minimum wage because trust me, farms do not make money. It is really, really challenging. So I thank you and that is my answer.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again through you.

A question pertaining to the growing season. We heard commentary pertaining to 90 days and my recollection of having had worked on a farm when I was a youngster a few years ago it, [Laughter] it was quite a few. It was substantially more than 90 days that the farming operation was going on from planting to full-fledged harvest well in excess of the 90 days and my question to the proponent of the Bill here or the Amendment, I should say, is that an accurate statement that it is well above 90 days?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

It is and I can tell, I can attest that in personal experience. For example two products that we used to provide but can no longer do, one was corn which could be planted in late April or beginning of May and that would last till around October 10th if weather conditions permitted.
Another one would be doing fruit and you have to prepare the land, you know, put minerals in the soil, do the picking and both those were well beyond 90 days and there are many other kinds of products that are grown or services that are provided that are well-beyond the 90 day limit.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

And thank you to the proponent of the Bill for the Answer there. And again just if we were not to make an adjustment to whatever Bill ends up passing here through Amendment could this really be the death nail to many of those small family farms that we are working so hard to preserve. I know in my community we are investing huge amounts of money in buying development rights to ensure that the family farm can continue and would this kind of an increase undermine that effort?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Paraphrasing the good Chairlady of Labor I am not going to speculate but I can tell you that from my experience and the farmers who I’ve dealt with and worked with they have a hard enough time without even factoring the labor costs between the preparation of the land, the equipment, the seed, the weather but I can promise you that as much as we like to pay people more than the minimum wage I don’t know of any farmers or very few farmers, certainly small farmers do not have the ability to be able to meet what you are talking about in this Bill, they simply don’t and they will have to adjust accordingly whether the death nail or not that just depends on the individual farm but I suspect pretty strongly with he way the farming community is right now they are going to have to make a major shift in what their business plan is going to be in agriculture.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

And again thank you to the proponent of this Amendment. Just a parting comment here I think if we really want to keep family farms in business, if we really want to preserve some modicum of the heritage of the State of Connecticut as a farming state, if we want to preserve open space and future green space for our children we need to pass this Amendment. Again I thank you for the opportunity to pass a few questions by the proponent and I urge my colleagues here to support this Amendment.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Remark further on House “C”? Representative Carney. Take just a minute.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was just hoping to ask one question.

Through you.

To the Chairwoman of Labor on the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Proceed.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

I was just wondering in the underlying Bill whether a seasonal employee for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection who is over the age or who is 18 and above would receive the minimum fair wage as proposed in the underlying Bill or be given a different wage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

I’m trying to relate this to Amendment “C” Representative Carney, could you give me help?

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Sure. So the Amendment has to do with seasonal employees. My question is in the underlying Bill, cause this is related to seasonal employees, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection offers a lot of seasonal employment. So I am just wondering in the underlying Bill whether an 18-year-old or above who is a seasonal employee at DEEP would be given a different wage than the minimum fair wage proposed in the underlying Bill?
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Now I get it. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I think I get it. But I want to clarify what the good Representative is askin me. He is askin me would the seasonal worker receive a fair minimum wage as we have it in the Bill going from $10.10 to $15 dollars an hour by 2023?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Thank you. Yes, the good Chairwoman is correct, that is what I was asking.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

And the age is 19, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Eighteen or above.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you for the clarity, good Representative that is correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD):

Okay, thank you very much Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the good Chairwoman of Labor’s response and because of that I do stand in strong support of the good Representative from Bristol’s Amendment. I know in the past we have had a lot of issues regarding funding for DEEP programs. I know parks have been closed, we’ve had to put together the Passport to Parks Program which has kept park funding available and kept a lot of parks open but many of the seasonal employment that DEEP offers including lifeguards which were on the chopping block in years past, part aids, interpretative guides, first-aid attendants, resource assistants, seasonal maintainers, office assistants and seasonal special conservation officers and a bunch of other
positions that DEEP only offers seasonally and I think it’s reasonable to say that a college student would probably accept those positions at a lower wage than what is being presented in this Bill and I do have concerns that if we raise those wages to something higher that we will be faced with additional costs on our parks and I am not really sure, I mean I’ve seen proposals that would take some money from the Passport to Parks Program so I do have a great deal of worry regarding funding for those parks and whether or not they will be able to stay open and vibrant for many of our residents here in the State of Connecticut but also tourists who come to the State of Connecticut which offer a great economic engine to many of our communities because of our state parks. In addition to that many of our municipalities offer a lot to tourists, just an example in Old Saybrook we have a municipal miniature golf course and speaking with the first selectman there, he has some concerns about the costs that that would incur if we had to raise the minimum wage up to $15 dollars an hour for that
position for somebody 18 years or older. So I do
support this Amendment. I appreciate the good
Representative from the 70th for bringing it out. I
think it is reasonable and I urge my colleagues
across the aisle to support this Amendment. Thank
you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Anyone else on House “C”? Representative Dubitsky. Give us a second. I think
that’s okay. I think your microphone is one.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker a few
questions for the good Chairwoman of Labor please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Sure.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

I am looking at Lines 51 through 57 of the
underlying Bill which is the Amendment and I believe
that is the section that would address young workers
under the age of 18 years old for 90 days and that
would theoretically be season workers. Is that the
section that good Chairwoman was talking about with
regard to the reduced minimum wage?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The subminimum wage would be for 16 and 17 year old’s and that would not be the section. This section pertains to the learners and beginners which we have eliminated in this Bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I support the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Anyone else on House “C”? Going once, going twice. In which case will the Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]
The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

And the Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “C”

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DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Amendment fails [Gavel]. Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Just a moment.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Yeah, I’m hiding over here. Yeah I know, that very tall attractive man was standing in front of me.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

[Laughter] The Chair will not comment.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Absolutely, its getting early or late, Mr. Speaker and I’m not sure which. So I do have a few questions for the proponent of the Bill as amended.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I’ve been reading extensively in the Public Hearing testimony and I notice there were a number of items submitted by not for profits. I’m looking specifically at testimony submitted by John Cattelan who is the Executive Director of the Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs and he points out the financial impact of this proposed
Bill. I am looking at the fiscal note and he notes that the $12 dollar per hour minimum wage that the financial impact would be $2.6 million and the compression impact at $12 dollar per hour would be almost $5 million dollars. At $15 dollars per hour it would be $4.5 million. I do see there needs to be increased funding because they are supplying daycare for Care4Kids. Does the fiscal note reflect that compression wage increase funding? I don’t know if the good Representative can hear me, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

I was just thinking that myself [Gavel]. thank you.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker and I would be happy to repeat my question if the good Representative had difficult hearing.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter were you able to hear it?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
I thank the good gentlelady for askin the question. I did hear her and I am prepared to answer. She is speakin about wage compression if I am not mistaken and that is not explicitly required under this Amendment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I thank her for her question and my actual question referred to the note from the Office of Fiscal Analysis. Does their forecast of increased cost to the State include that wage compression?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It is not explicitly required under the Amendment and I believe that is somethin that will be addressed as we go through the Appropriation Budget process.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

So if I understand correctly, the fiscal note as it does not address that wage compression which obviously is something that will be felt by these not for profits would result in even greater cost to the State. Is that not correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I cannot predict that.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I appreciate the good Gentlelady’s discretion in this but I think if we look at the math there will be increased costs. I do know I attended an
Early Childhood Learning Seminar at Three Rivers Community College where the executive director of the Riverfront Children’s Center was present and she indicated the cost of the proposed $15 dollar minimum wage including the wage compression would amount to a $300,000 addition to her annual overhead. She was very upset by this. She stated and she could not in good conscience pass on this cost to her low income parents. She was thrilled to have them be better off but she didn’t see how this increased cost in terms of her overhead would allow her to continue to deliver the high quality childcare to carry out her mission absent increased appropriations from the State of an increase to the cost of her parents. I myself run a non for profit. We have received no local, State or Federal funding. If I were to have to go to that $15 dollar minimum wage it would add $15,000 to $20,000 dollars a year to my overhead. Now I have three fulltime employees including myself and ten part-time employees. Seven out of then of them are teachers who are taking time off or retired teachers. They are not the sole
support of their households and I pay them what I can. We start at $12 dollars an hour, after 90 days we go up to $13 dollars an hour and I try and raise everyone’s wage a dollar a year after that. We also are member of Museums for All. Anyone presenting an EBT or SNAP card is admitted for a dollar per person for up to six people. Our ordinary admission is eight dollars. We want to make my museum accessible for everyone. That is part of our mission to provide a safe, caring, inclusive environment where children can learn and play and discover. We offer subsidized military memberships. Any active duty military based on rank has a heavily subsidized membership. Family memberships are ordinarily $85 dollars a year, a E6 the lowest enlisted rank if I am not mistaken can have that family membership for $45 dollars a year. That is unlimited admission. I don’t know many places where a family of up to six can go on an unlimited basis for $45 dollars a year. If I have to find that extra $15,000 to $20,000 dollars do I get out of Museums for All? Do I raise my entrance fee of eight dollars per person? Do I
knock on more doors? Sure, I’ll do what I have to but this is going to be a burden to me and it is going to be a burden to all the other not for profits who submitted testimony. So accordingly Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has in his hand an Amendment LCO No. 8204 and I ask that he call that Amendment and I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The Clerk is indeed in possession of LCO No. 8204 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule “D”. The gentlewoman has asked leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there objection. Hearing none. Representative Cheeseman.

[Background comment - you didn’t call it.]

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Oh, I’m sorry. I skipped a piece. Will the Clerk call the Amendment that will be designated House Amendment Schedule “D”? CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “D” LCO No. 8204
offered by Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

    Now, Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Amendment is a very simple one, after the last section it adds this provision, “increases to the minimum fair wage on or after October 1, 2019 shall not apply to employers that are not for profit entities, not for profit hospitals and institutions of higher education.” And I urge adoption of the Amendment and when the vote is taken I ask that it be taken by role please, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

    Of course. The question is on adoption of House Amendment Schedule “D” and when the vote is taken it will be taken by role call. Would you care to remark further? ma’am.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

    Yes, I would. I think this rapid increase in the minimum wage for many not for profit represents
and existential crisis. Not for profits are devoted to their mission. They care no less than any other organization about the well-being of their employees and for the fulfillment of their mission be it a children’s museum like me, be it a boys and girls club such as was referenced by Representative Betts, was it my Riverfront Children’s Center or the YMCAs. We need to one, trust them to pay their employees what is fair and what they can and not create a burden on them that may cause them to have to forfeit that mission to which they are dedicated. So with the well-being of these not for profits and their employees, and the people we serve I urge everyone in this Chamber to adopt this Amendment. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the sentiment of this Amendment but as with the others I would axe that my colleagues please vote against this Amendment seein that I do not support it.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, ma’am. On House “D” would anyone else care to remark? Give me a sign or something.

Oh, Representative McCarty and in the future I am going to ask you to stand up, it’s easier to see.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

Thank you very much, good evening.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Good evening or good morning.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

Yes, I rise in very strong support of this Amendment. I absolutely know firsthand the really harm that it can do to many of the nonprofits if they have to raise this minimum wage. In fact just recently I was at a meeting where a payment schedule was made for all of the employers at a particular nonprofit and they said right then that if the minimum wage did go up with the idea this could be discussed here in the future they were saying right at that meeting they would in fact lose employees, have to cutback on the workforce and that it would
do great harm and this was just right after they had put into place a new payment schedule so there is tremendous fear out by the nonprofits about raising the minimum wage. So thank you for this opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, ma’am. Anyone else on House “D”? Stand up and hold your microphone and that will be kind of a clue. Representative MacLachlan.

REP. MAC LACHLAN (35TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Good morning.

REP. MAC LACHLAN (35TH):

Just a few comments on the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed.

REP. MAC LACHLAN (35TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I recently had the opportunity in several forums the first being a local Middlesex Chamber Legislative Breakfast where we had an opportunity to meet with the business
community in the Lower Connecticut River Valley as well as members of the nonprofit community that work very closely hand-in-hand to address these social needs of our area of the State. And one of the questions in the crowd after we were done making introductions and we took questions, and one of the questions that came up was, what our position was or any intentions we had in allocating funds and further empowering nonprofit organizations to deliver key services on behalf of the State which I thought was an interesting idea. Certainly relives the burden of government in a way by empowering local organization that know their constituencies and the people they serve better than probably we can. And when I think about this Amendment I think about the nonprofit organizations that are already running really thin. Every nonprofit has the same two issues, they are short on cash and short on time. And I am concerned that we’re gonna put men and women who, rather than spend their time in the private sector where they can clearly make more money, instead give their time and chose to find
their work from place of giving and I think we are gonna make that decision harder for these organizations. We are going to make it more difficult for nonprofit organizations that serve the people of our State. We are going to make it more difficult for them to do their job. You know, I was lucky enough to be able to go to summer camp as a kid, YMCA in particular. They are near and dear to my heart and lucky to serve on the Board of my local Y and I certainly don’t speak on their behalf but when I think about this Amendment and how to vote on it and the way I think it would improve the underlying Bill I think of the local YMCA camp that I went to as a kid and one of the benefits of the Y apart from getting out of my parent’s house and being out in the woods for a few weeks, it was actually the multicultural aspect of it. These camps are actually ways that folks from other countries come into the U.S. and to work. I think most of my camp counselors actually were folks on work visas from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and so what could have been two weeks of learning
how to shoot a bow and arrow and figure out how to swim in the deep end of the pond actually turned into an opportunity to learn other perspectives as to how other countries, people from other countries viewed the United States, what kind of values did they, were they raised based on their culture to value and to what degree will making the cost of business, cost of operation for organizations like summer camp, nonprofit organizations that run summer camps that provide an outlet for young people particularly when mom and dad are working, keeping ‘em out of compromising situations by just being in a safe place where they can spend their time constructively. It’s what degree does the cost of those experiences go up. I was fortunate. Camp isn’t cheap. And so this is certainly a complicated, a complicated issue and I want to thank the proponent of this Amendment for bringing it forward. Let’s try to keep in mind the nonprofit organizations that serve young people, the sacrifices that they make to give back and I will be supporting the Amendment. Thank you, sir.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Remark further on House “D”? Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And hope you won’t confuse me with someone else this time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Me, too.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

A question for the proponent of the Amendment. I have had the opportunity to visit YWCAs different facilities they have in a number of communities. I sit on a charity board that actually awards them, or awards charities money and I’ve seen just how difficult it is for them to operate. Without these changes, can you enumerate the types of problems that organizations like that are gonna encounter and what other organizations say the YWCAs that are doing great work out there would experience?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):
Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Well I comment from my experience as someone running a not for profit, obviously they are big and small certainly. Your resources are finite and at the end of the day I like to say not profit does not mean lose business. If you as a not profit aren’t making at least a little bit of money, you have not money to improve your facility, to cover increased costs, to offer your workers better wages and salary. So if you have this new unexpected increase in your overheads you have to look at where you can make those savings. Perhaps you cut your hours whereas you might have been open till eight o’clock every night, maybe now you are only open till eight on Friday and Saturday. You know, you go out look at your electricity prices. We recently converted to LED; we are paying for that our of the savings we are getting in our electricity costs. You look at every way you can but we have little bracelets we give away to our guests. If all of a sudden I have to fine one, two, three thousand dollars those
things you do to enhance your member visits go away and at the end of the day, if you have to, you’re gonna reduce people’s time and people’s pay. That, I mean for many not for profits your biggest expense are your personnel costs and once you have made all the savings you can in terms of, you know, turning the thermostat down and finding a new supplier for your toilet paper and your paper towels which my visitor services person recently did when out and found a better deal for us because every penny counts at the end of the day, those people who you wanted to help by raising their wage will be the very people if you cannot afford to employ them, who are going to suffer. So that is what I am afraid is going to happen.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

I want to thank the proponent of the Amendment
for the answer there and just as a follow up at what point do you actually start cutting programs that effect the quality of the experience that these nonprofits are providing?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I think that is obviously your last resort because the purpose of the not profit is to carry out it’s mission. Every not for profit has a Mission Statement and that is, it is in your IRS listing. If you want to change your Mission Statement you have to go to the IRS to change it. So it is the quintessence of your not for profit. But yes, if it comes to the point where I either cut my programs or close my doors, I’m going to have to cut my programs but that is not a choice one wants to have to make and that is not a choice that not for profits would be forced to make at least not so quickly should this Amendment pass.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
Representative Delnicki.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

Are there any opportunities for grants and other funding sources to makeup for what your losses, what your overhead costs are gonna be in a situation like this that can actually keep programs or is that pretty much gonna be a fait accompli that you will have to deal with that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Representative Cheeseman.

There are grant programs out there. We have a budget of about $400,000 dollars and typically we will get between $80,000 and $100,000 dollars in grants but those grants, one are almost never for overhead and personnel costs. They will be certainly speaking for my museum; they will be for specific programs. We do a lot in our local
community schools. We have engineering programs, environmental programs, all hands on inquiry based learning but those are very discreet programs, funding for things we actually do on site, that is much more difficult to come by and the grant process is very competitive. There are many, many more requests that grand funders receive than they are able to award. So yes there are grants available but they are not gonna cover all of your overheads as you face these increased costs.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

And again I would like to thank the proponent for the answer there.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

I can attest to the fact that sitting on a charity board we see so many new grant requests come through and you’re right there is a limited finite amount of grant money available. I know on the charity board I sit on, and each and every one of
these applications is a worthy one and each and every one attempts do to something better for their community, improve the experience for their children that are involved there and to insure that the doors are open, the lights are on and the building is either heated or cooled. So at what point do you find yourself actually having to make those cuts in people and the reduction in services and a downgrade in your ability to provide that type of a nonprofit, that type of a museum experience based on something like what we are looking at here tonight or this morning I should say?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I thank the Representative for his question. I think that really depends on the financial health of the institution. If you have a healthy savings account, if you have money in the bank then obviously you can withstand these vagaries of finances for a longer period of time than you can if
you are sailing very close to the wind. So it is very difficult to give definitive answer. It really depends on the fiscal health of the organization but most not for profits are, let’s just say, most not for profits I know of are not rolling in dough with, you know, six, seven figure bank accounts. So unfortunately it might not be very long before those difficult choices and cuts have to be made.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the proponent of the Amendment. It makes a lot of sense. The nonprofits are a very, very unique group that provides such important value to it, each and every community and the folks that I know that actually work for nonprofits they are investing their heart, their life and their wherewithal in essence in providing those services and I certainly hope that my
colleagues will support your Amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Anyone else on House “D”? In which case. I’m sorry, Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a few questions.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

For the Chairlady of the Labor Committee please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you. I was wondering if there were any, in preparation of this Bill, to raise the minimum wage, were there any studies to determine whether or not nonprofits, museums and the like could sustain a paying their employees this type of wage?

Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.  Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

No.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  So I would ask what kind of data was used in the analysis when determining when deciding the scale of increases over time, what kind of data was used to determine if nonprofits or if any business was able to sustain this type of increase in wages and still maintain viability?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

None to my knowledge.
Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So am I correct to assume that we, that the proponent of the Bill and those who put this Bill together have no idea of the effect that this Bill is going to have on the nonprofits?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

We have had conversation with nonprofits. We do understand the concerns and the possible impact but one thing that I will say is that I have a hard time reconcilin how a nonprofit can be mission driven and not pay a livin wage or support the idea of raisin the minimum wage.

So through you, Mr. Speaker.

We have taken into consideration but we have
also taken into consideration the many of hundreds of thousands of workers in this State that are going to work every single day for poverty wages, havin to work two and three jobs to make ends meet.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The good Representative said she has a hard time understanding how they could feel that way. Is it, do I interpret that to mean that the nonprofits that the good Chairwoman has spoken to were indeed opposed to this Bill?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

First and foremost for clarity, I did not say I feel, I said a nonprofit could have a mission and there are some nonprofits that do support this and
there are some that don’t.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It appears to me that there are quite a number of nonprofits that while they would love to pay their employees far more than minimum wage, and far more than $15 dollars an hour in this economy simply cannot sustain themselves and simply cannot remain open if they are compelled by the State to pay this kind of wage.

And through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is it the good Chairlady’s thought that those companies and those nonprofits should simply?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Maybe if you could rephrase that, it is not opinions, it’s not her thoughts, its not her beliefs, ask a question soliciting information on the Bill and it will be a little easier.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Okay. Does the good Chairwoman know or have
any idea how many nonprofits is this State will be put of business if this Bill goes through as written?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

That is kind of asking for a speculative opinion. Perhaps if you could rephrase that.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Okay. Is there any way to tell how many nonprofits will be put out of business based on having to pay this type of wage to employees?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I still see that as a question of speculation. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Is it fair to say that there will be some? Through you.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Again you are asking her for her. You are asking her to speculate and as the good lady has said she will decline to speculate. Try again.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Excuse me, one second.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Of course.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Was there any testimony from any nonprofits who indicated that they would be injured or would be forced to close if this Bill went through and that the State forced them to pay $15 dollar minimum wage?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do recollect them sayin they would be injured or maybe have to lay-off people, I don’t recollect
them havin to close but not sayin that they did not say that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It would seem to me that if we are going to compel nonprofits to pay a wage that is beyond their ability to sustain and that it would cause them to go out of business and to lay-off their employees, and to shut down their operations we have done the exact opposite of what we are trying to do with regard to providing livable conditions in this State and this Amendment would allow nonprofits which we give certain benefits to because they have a purpose that advances our goals we give them certain privileges, certain tax benefits and I think that if we compel them to maintain a wage that they cannot survive on we would be doing the exact opposite of what we should be doing in this legislature. So I support this Amendment and I hope we can come to
some type of resolution to make sure that nonprofits can continue to operate in this State without being pushed out of business. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Anyone else like to remark on House Amendment Schedule “D”? Representative Buckbee. It’ll take us a minute. There we go.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hadn’t planned on speaking on the Amendment but I felt compelled to. I am also an executive director of a nonprofit organization and I sit on the board of two additional nonprofits as well and I wanted to touch on the comments made by my colleague about grant money and funding and how tough that is to come by and why we can’t use that for operational expenses. That money for me is a park it is a 48 acre nonprofit park. And we survive currently on about 10,000 hours of volunteer work a year. Consider that number is a pretty strong number 10,000 hours of volunteer work to keep
us afloat. We pay what we can in the money that we have. To force our hand in that is a very difficult situation as it is for any other nonprofit and the multiple nonprofits in my community in my district. So I guess I do have a question for the proponent of the Bill in regard to the impact was brought up and I guess I would say that the fiscal responsibility question I would have around this was any additional study or research done to inquire within these nonprofits to what this would impact them aside those who were to come for Public Hearing but was there any outgoing research done to find out how this would impact the people of the nonprofits?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you ask the kind gentleman to please repeat his question?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Buckbee.
REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

It would be my pleasure. Thank you. Was any research done to study the existing nonprofits and how this would impact them in their ability to maintain staffing as they currently have?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I just received information that it would impact 24,000 but we do not know how that would play out fiscally.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Buckbee.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Thank you. I am not entirely sure what that means so I ask for additional clarity?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Maybe I need to ask for further clarity on the question that I thought I was askin.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

I believe she would like you to repeat the original question, Representative Buckbee.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Certainly, my pleasure Mr. Speaker. I am asking if any research had been done to the financial and economic impact of these nonprofits across the State?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter, do you understand the question?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I don’t.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Third time is a charm. Shall we try again?
REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

I’ll back it up a little bit. We talked about nonprofits who came to the Public Hearings to reach out. Was any research done on the fiscal impact of this to those nonprofits without them coming to the Public Hearing, was any of that research done to find out what that would be prior to the Bill being disseminated?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter is that better?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Third time was the charm. Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you good gentleman.

No.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Buckbee.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

So can I also ask for clarity on the information that was just received, 24,000 what? Was that 24,000 nonprofits, 24,000 individuals, what
that might be?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes 24,000 nonprofits would be directly affected by this minimum wage increase.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I’m sorry, nonprofits.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Did you get that?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Nonprofit workers. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Buckbee.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Thank you, thank you for that answer, 24,000 individuals. And what that does is not just impact the individuals it impacts the existence of said nonprofit and what that allows people to have. Again speaking from my personal experience in a park which
is a pretty rare thing. A lot of parks that are municipally owned or State owned we are a nonprofit park that would close, really close the gates on someone like us where it impacts so many of thousands of people within the community on a regular basis are able to do this. So that I think is the primary concern is, I guess my question if this is such a strong fiscal impact do we know what those dollars might become?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

We know what the people are, we know there is that many nonprofits what would be that financial impact?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Just for clarity that would be 24,000 nonprofit workers who would be affected by the minimum wage increase bein proposed in this legislation and I would just like to also state that according to the
Connecticut Council for Philanthropy, Connecticut is home to 1,600 foundations with assets of $12 billion and giving of $1.4 billion as of 2016. Three years, just three years ago, so the question of how this would impact them fiscally, according to this calculation I think it would be something that they could afford to absorb in the members that are related to this report through the Connecticut Council of Philanthropy.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Buckbee.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Thank you for that answer.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is that number based on assets of a nonprofit? I’m just trying to confirm what that means?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I don’t have that information.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Buckbee.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Thank you so much for that. I think that is the concern. There seems to be a lot of unanswered questions to move forward on something that has such a strong impact on community and nonprofits across the State. It is not a small number 24,000 individuals who while the numbers may look good on an asset piece does not mean there is that much disposable income or dollars available. Those dollars are really difficult to come by for nonprofits who are aren’t there to pay large salaries for anyone and these people who are working there, a lot of them are doing so to give back to be a part of things and aren’t asking for the extra dollars they are about to receive. They are about to drain or maybe close these nonprofits. That is a big concern and these are people who are a big part of our communities that are really going to be shutout. There is a lot more that we can do in learning what this impact would be before we force a
new mandate and a new law of the State. I think it is our job to be a little more fiscally responsible and looking at the impact of all the taxpayers and not just one or two. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Remark further on House Amendment Schedule “D”? Let me say this again, stand up and wave. [Laughs] Representative Wilson. The system isn’t designed to do what we are doing here, so it takes a minute. There we go. All set? No. Try now.

REP. D. WILSON (66TH):

Ahh, technology it’s not used to running at this hour of the morning, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to, think what I call a point of clarification regarding the assets of nonprofit organizations. I’m not an attorney but I have served on the boards of many nonprofits and I am a financial advisor and advise a few nonprofits on their endowments and there is statutory law that requires the use of prudent fiduciary rules. Many
of the endowments of these nonprofit organizations are restricted by the donor so the perception that a nonprofit may be able to invade their endowment in their principle to cover shortages is misgiven and I would just like to state that for the record, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule “D”? Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Good morning.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Give us a moment. Just a second. There he is. You’re microphone on now, sir.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Yes, it’s on. Thank you Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I am speaking in favor of the Amendment. In most of our communities we have nonprofits and in North Haven we have Easter Seals, we have BHcare and we have Sarah and I visited all three of them in the last month. Like many of us we visit our nonprofits,
our local businesses. We hopefully listen to them and really ask them what they actually say and everyone of ‘em said that they cannot afford this. Sarah for instance, they drive throughout the whole State with folks of intellectual and physical disabilities. Between the tolls that are coming in front of us and of course this increased minimum wage as much as they want to help and continue to do their great they will not be able to sustain it at the $15 dollars an hour minimum wage. And I can’t see how in good conscience we cannot exempt them from this proposal. So I would like to ask a question to the good Chairwoman of Labor.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

In New Haven I visit, New Haven, I visit homeless shelters in New Haven, the Columbus House, I visit Harkness House, I visit, oh my gosh, Lights Haven. I don’t know if you visit those, those are all nonprofits and the YMCA,YWCA. Do you visit them and do they actually tell you they have no problem with raising the minimum wage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
My question is simple. I visit nonprofits not just in North Haven, Connecticut but I do in Wallingford, I do in work with homeless people in New Haven. So in New Haven there is Columbus House, there is Harkness House, there is Light’s Haven.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Does the good Chairwoman of Labor visit those agencies and do they actually say they have no problem with the raising of the minimum wage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes I do and no they haven’t said that they don’t have a problem with it, it would be a tremendous challenge but I think speculation on everyone’s part to say that this would force them to close their doors.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Yaccarino.
REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I appreciate that answer but the fact is they are helping the most vulnerable and we are hurting the most vulnerable with this and people can’t see this, they are just thinking of their own self. This doesn’t move anything forward. This is, I’ve seen a lot in my aging years and this is just a horrible proposal for nonprofits. There are so many attacks on them right now. So I stand in strong support of this exemption and many other exemptions for that matter. So through that, thank you for the time and I stand in strong support. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you Representative Yaccarino. Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule “D”? Will you remark? If not Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the
Chamber.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? If all the members have voted, please check the board to insure your vote is properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “D”

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SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Amendment is rejected [Gavel]. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended?

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Mr. Speaker I have a few more questions for the proponent if I may?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Cheeseman, you have the floor, madam.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker
Through you, Mr. Speaker.
I see that there is a four-and-a half year phase in for this minimum wage.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.
Can you explain what the genesis of this four-and-a half year period was?
Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
We actually landed there because we were tryin to accommodate those that have requested that we expend the years that we do this minimum wage, we started out at three years in our original Bill, we went from three to four which was reflected in the Governor’s Bill and then we went another six months.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.
SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And were there any other states that have recently implemented a minimum wage at whose time scale you looked at?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

May I ask which of those states were?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I would have to get back to the good lady on
that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And I just wondered and I will look forward to hearing from the proponent. I know Massachusetts recently implemented that; they chose a five year period. Oregon has implemented that, that actually started in 2016 and will finish in 2023 and in Oregon they actually have three different minimum wage levels, one is a standard, one is a Portland Metro which deals with large urban areas and one is a nonurban county.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Was such a scale considered in Connecticut?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not sure if that was taken into consideration when we looked at the other states.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It just occurs to me that even in our very small state nowhere as large as Oregon we do have large differentials in cost of living. Obviously the cost of living in Fairfield County is not going to be the same as in Windham or Tolland and it would occur to me it would go far to accommodate the concerns particularly of small employers and not for profits if we look at some sort of geographic wage scale.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is the proponent of the Bill familiar with Maryland’s recent wage increase?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Not of the top of my head.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

In Maryland their minimum wage again is going up over a period of six years and they actually differentiate between employees with more than 15 employees and employers with fewer than 15 employees. Was such a level of employment looked at when considering this implementation of the increased minimum wage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not know but I’m assumin the good Representative will tell us just as she did with the
last question she posed to me.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

I wish I could but I was actually asking the good Representative if a similar way of scaling the minimum wage increase was considered in Connecticut that we would have one scale for employers with more than 15 employees and one scale for employers with fewer employees and I was asking if that had been considered in Connecticut?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. And oh I see that there is not a
differential for apprentices. Can I ask why that was not considered?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Not sure.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The reason I ask and people in the Chamber will probably been bored at how often I tout my great Eastern Workforce Investment Board but in their manufacturing initiative I know one employer in particular hire pre-apprentices at $13 dollars an hour after a period of 18 weeks then go up to $18 dollars an hour and then $20 dollars an hour. When I asked him what would happen if this $15 dollar minimum wage were implemented, he explained he would have no choice but to hire fewer pre-apprentices and
hence my question whether or not the affect on our manufacturing pipeline projects and our apprenticeship programs was considered when this Bill was drafted?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That sounded like a statement so if there was a question could you please have the good gentlewoman?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Repeat it?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman can you rephrase your question in a way that is clear to the proponent of the Bill?

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Certainly, Mr. Speaker. Was the possible impact on our apprenticeship programs considered
when considering the increase in the minimum wage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):
Thank you. I also have a plumbing and HVAC contractor in my area and he is mandated by the State to start his journeymen and apprentices at $10.10 an hour, after 8,000 hours they go up to $20 dollars an hour, were the needs of people in the skilled trades like that considered when this legislation was drafted?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.
Could the good gentlewoman please repeat the question?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman please repeat the question, madam.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Certainly. An HVAC contractor in my district explained that his entry level employees are mandated by the State to be hired at the minimum wage, they start at $10.10 currently an hour. After 8,000 hours their wage goes up to $20 dollars an hour and after that climbs pretty quickly. He too stated that this would present a real hardship when it came to hiring and my question was were those state mandated requirements with regard to the hiring of skilled workers taken into account when this legislation was drafter?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Not sure.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Cheeseman.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you and I believe that concludes my questions, Mr. Speaker. I do have a few comments. I find the possible effect that this is going to have on the not profits very worrying. I would feel that way even if I were not running a not for profit. I find the possible effect this is going to have on our apprenticeship programs, on our HVAC contractors like the one in my region very concerning but what I think we’re not really addressing with this is why we are even having this conversation. The rest of the country in may states, the Fight for Fifteen is gone away because the economies are so buoyant and so thriving that employers are forced because of shortage of workers because of the need to compete for these skilled laborers to offer packages well in excess of $15 dollars an hour. I’m looking at a Bloomberg piece
dated from May last year and it’s title was “This is What Record Low Unemployment Looks Like in America.” They looked at Portland, Maine, Maryetta, Georgia and Ames, Iowa and in all these small cities they found robust hiring. “Lanre Bakare, a 36-year-old Nigerian immigrant, was homeless and had little marketable work,” a federally funded not for profit trained him. He earns $40,000 dollars annually with healthcare and good benefits. Cobb Works a call center has been moving up. Companies are supplying higher wages and benefits that exceed anything that we see in this State. One hundred percent of employee health insurance premiums paid up from 75 percent allows employees to work from home four or five days a week. A call center allows its employees to call from home and every five years offers a sabbatical for it’s workers. This is what we could have in Connecticut if we didn’t keep doing things to discourage workers and business and I have heard references to the people struggling on the minimum wage. I have also heard references to businesses who will struggle to deal with that
minimum wage. Business are not faceless; businesses are run by people. I think of three women in particular in my district Wanda Hatch who runs that HVAC Company in my district. Cindy Lightner who owns a small retail shop, Terry Smith who owns a greenhouse and gardening company they are the face of small business. These are women who get up everyday and bet everything they own that it is still gonna be there at the end of the day. They treat their employees well. They may go weeks taking no wages so they can pay their workers, they can pay the State of Connecticut, they can pay the Federal Government, they can pay their suppliers and they can keep the lights on. I care about people who aren’t doing well on the minimum wage but I care equally about the men and women and the women in particular who do put everything on the line everyday to keep those doors open, to keep those employees working. I bent over backwards at my museum to do what I can to pay my employees as much as I can to be flexible in their workhours, to let them work from home when they can. I am not Simon
Legree and my constituents who own business are not J. P. Morgan they are not sitting at home clipping dividend coupons. They are working to advance this State and it is our job, I feel as a legislature to work with them to create the environment where we aren’t have to have this conversation about forcing companies that may not have the financial wherewithal to pay their employees wages that are going to drive them out of business and as I said we wouldn’t even be having this conversation if we had the kind of robust economy that our surrounding states, Massachusetts which everyone likes to cite which has regained 300 percent of the jobs that it lost in the recession. So I look forward to hearing the rest of the debate but I think we have to remember that the business owners who are going to bear the burden are not the Aetna’s, not the Anthems, they are the R&W Heating, they are the Smith Acres, they are the Smoochy Bird in my town, they are the not for profits like the YWCA, like the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bristol and we have to keep them in mind because without them, even those
minimum wage jobs won’t be there. So I thank you for your indulgence Mr. Speaker and I will not be supporting this Bill. Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Perillo of the 113th, sir, you have the floor.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I find over and over in the years we have had these discussion, we have had these debates about the minimum wage there are some common misconceptions about business that are mentioned over, and over and over. There seems to be this sense that companies have an endless pot of money from which they can do whatever they want. But that is simply not true. Actually Representative Candelora much, much, much earlier in the discussion referenced that when you own a business, when you run a business you understand what it is like to have to pay your workers, you have to meet payroll. That is owning a business 101. I gotta make payroll. I’ve done
that. Let me tell you how that works. If I as a business owner have a hundred dollars an hour to pay employees and I have ten employees making $10 dollars an hour that works for me, that works but if I raise that hourly wage to $15 I still only have $100 dollars my business model didn’t change. I didn’t invent new revenue, nothing new came to me. I can’t afford to pay ten people, certainly not pay them for 40 hours a week it just doesn’t work that way. There is not an endless pile of money. Employers only have so much they can pay their employees and we hear often and it is just so true that when you increase the cost of doing business something has to give and certainly some employees would benefit from making more money every money, I get that, we all appreciate it and we wish we could do that for everybody but at the end of the day some people have to lose out to, they lose hours, they lose their job, you know, and the Ranking Member mentioned earlier, you know, you get a raise, and you get a raise and you get a raise except for you two, you get a pink slip. You just can’t have it
all, you can’t have it both ways, it just doesn’t work and I understand proponents of this really want to help people and so do I, so do I but my big concern is at the end of the day while we may be helping some we are really, really harming others. Folks who are going to lose their jobs because of this. Folks are gonna lose hours because of this. I just don’t see; I don’t see a way around that and it is unfortunate. I do have some questions though and I would direct them to the. [Unrelated background conversation] So I will continue to monolog for a bit [Laughter]. So anyways, I’m off, I’m totally off my rhythm cause it’s three in the morning.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative if you would like, the Chamber could stand-at-ease.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Let’s do that. Let’s do that, that’s great, a great idea, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Chamber will stand-at-ease [Gavel].
Representative Perillo.

The House come back to order [Gavel]. Are there any announcements or introductions?

Representative Rojas of the 9th District. Sir, you have the floor. Representative Rojas, please proceed sir.

REP. ROJAS (9TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker For an introduction.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please proceed.

REP. ROJAS (9TH):

Despite the late hour, I would like the Chamber to provide a warm welcome to the third grade class from the Capital Hill Elementary School. [Cheering]. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [Applause].

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Representative.

Representative Perillo you did have the floor, it returns to you, sir and it looks as though the fine Chair of the Labor Committee is now back in the Chamber and prepared for questioning. So, Representative Perillo you now have the floor, sir.
REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I could a few questions.

Through you.

As we look at line 54 and this regards younger employees under the age of 18 we use 90 days as a time period which they would receive a lower rate of pay. I am wondering how we got to 90 days, how did that become the number chosen for that. I appreciate that this is included in the Bill, I think that we have to recognize that when you have a younger employee, they got to learn a little bit but how did we get to 90 days?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That was done through, blah, blah, it’s getting late, negotiations with the Governor.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you and I can appreciate that there is a negotiation and anything but there has to be a rationale behind 90 days. What magical thing happens at 90 days that you automatically get more money?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I can’t speak to the rationale as I said, it was stated it was through negotiations and that was somethin that was suggested on behalf of the Governor’s Office and it was also done as an exchange so that we could eliminate the learner and the beginners permit but this speaks specifically to why specifically 90 days, I cannot respond.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.
REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you and I appreciate and I respect the response but I have to say we’ve got a number in here that is pretty significant and we can’t even give a rationale as to why that number is there. I understand the value of negotiation it is how things get done in this building but if we are going to do something as important as this, there ought to be a reason behind it that we can describe, explain and that is not done here and it is not the Chairwoman’s fault, it just is what it is. If we move on to lines 58 through 64, this has to do with situations in which there is negative growth for two quarters. Now line 65 states that after receiving a report from the Commissioner of Labor the Governor may submit his or her recommendations regarding the suspension of wage increases. So the Governor would receive this report but would the Governor have to make recommendations or could the Governor just stick that report in the bottom drawer and move on?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I would have to ask the good gentleman please repeat the question.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Sure, Mr. Speaker gladly. The language here states that upon receiving a report from the Commissioner of Labor about recession, that the Governor, the word is “may” make recommendations to the legislature on whether or not to suspend increases in the minimum wage. The word “may” seems strange there. I would imagine that if indeed there is a recession for two quarters, the Governor must, shall issue a recommendation to us as to whether or not we should suspend increases in the minimum wage. Is the word “may” intentional there, do we want to make this optional to the Governor, can the governor just get the report and throw it in the bottom drawer and forget about it?
Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It is “may” because it is optional and I would hope the Governor would not receive a report and throw it in the bottom of his drawer and I was told in response to your previous question that the Governor wanted it lined up with summer jobs that is why we chose 90 days and that he thought it was easier for DOL to track days rather than hours.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you and I thank the Chair for answers to both questions. So if the Governor, I also would hope that the Governor wouldn’t just throw a report in the drawer. Let’s say the Governor actually does make recommendations to this body. Does the legislature then have to act on those
recommendations?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

So then, again I thank the Chair for her answer to the question but then it would seem to me though that this is all permissive and doesn’t necessarily have a whole lot of teeth which is concerning to me because obviously if we are in some sort of death spiral in terms of a recession we would want to take action, yet it is not required at all. We are not even required to take a vote and that is concerning. We should at least have to formally weigh in as a legislative body on whether or not increases should be suspended and I am sorry to hear, to see that.
But if we could move on ever slightly, to line 119 and this gets to the tip credit which I am also happy to see this language included but I have some specific questions as it refers to individuals in the restaurant industry who receive tips. There are also individuals in the restaurant industry who do not commonly receive tips. You know, folks who work in the kitchen don’t necessarily receive tips. Would the full minimum wage be required to be paid to those individuals who work in a restaurant who don’t receive tips?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you and I appreciate that. The tip credit though in the language that is before us is
exclusive to the restaurant industry and hotel
industry and I understand that. But I remember when
I was in high school I had a job, I worked at a golf
course and it was very common for us to receive tips
in fact you kinda hoped you would get tips cause you
didn’t make a lot of money otherwise. Does this
extend to jobs outside of the restaurant and hotel
industry were you actually commonly would receive
tips? Could that employer of mine when I was in
high schools have paid me less than a minimum wage
expecting that my tips would get me to where I
needed to be?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

That is not addressed in this Bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you. So my understandin is that if I am
in a profession, in a job where I commonly receive tips but I don’t work in a restaurant there is no tip-credit, is that correct?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I’m sorry, could he please repeat that?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo please repeat the question.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. So just to clarify if I am in a job where I commonly receive tips but I am not in a restaurant, the tip-credit doesn’t apply to me at all. My employer would still have to pay me the full amount, is that correct?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

According to this legislation this tip-credit exemption only would apply to bartenders and
servers.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually that leads me to another question. So if it is just bartenders and servers what about a situation there are a lot of restaurants where tips are pooled and maybe some of that money in fact is given to the hostess. How would that be handled in this situation?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

As long as it doesn’t apply to bartenders and servers. They are the ones being addressed in this language so whatever is currently in statute regarding what the good gentleman is talkin about would apply.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.
REP. PERILLO (113TH):

I appreciate that answer but to clarify I’m not sure that is accurate. The Bill references individuals “who are employed in the hotel and restaurant industry” to me that would include food hostesses if those hostesses are getting tips, they are not servers or bartenders, I am not trying to be nitpicky but there is something incorrect in that answer I would like to clarify it for the record. Could the Chairman do that please?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What’s the question?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo, could you rephrase the question?

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker when I asked the previous question, the Chair of the Committee stated
that the tip-credit would only pertain to bartenders and servers. As I read the language here that does not appear to be the case. It states that individuals that are “employed in the hotel and restaurant industry” that could also include hostesses which is what my question was. I would just ask that the chair please clarify whether or not it is just limited or servers and bartenders or would it include others in the restaurant industry who generally receive tips?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The Federal Law says workers can only pool tips if they customarily receive tips like servers and bartenders.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And what if this
restaurant customarily pools tips and distribute some of those tips to the hostess? Would that hostess be accounted for in this section of the statute?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Not certain, I would have to get back to the good gentleman on that question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

This is a pretty big deal and if it is not possible I understand but is there a way we could get that answer if not, right now, but before we are doing with this line of questioning I would like to know the answer to that question.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Okay, Representative Perillo why don’t you jump on to the next question before the end we will try to get that clarified.
REP. PERILLO (113TH):

I appreciate that very much, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you. If we can move on to lines 132 to 136 and I notice refers very specifically to bartenders but I really want to understand and I truly do not understand this section of the Bill. It references again, it is part of the tip-credit part of the Bill, it says, “the Labor Commissioner shall recognize, as part of the minimum fair wage, gratuities in an amount equal to the difference between the minimum fair wage and the employer's share.” Could the Chair explain to me how that difference is calculated?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Bartenders are at a tip-wage at $8.23 so that would be compensated that they do not make the minimum wage by the employer.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you and I appreciate that answer. What I am trying to understand though is lines 133 and 134 refer to gratuities in an amount equal to the difference, the difference between the minimum fair wage and the employer’s share. How is that difference calculated and how does the Commissioner of Labor determine whether or not tips meet that threshold?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The tips are to be recorded and the difference if not made is the employer’s responsibility for the employees, to pay the employee the employers share. So if it is dead at the restaurant, and I’m not makin any money and I record zero then it would be the employer’s responsibility to pay me $10.10 if I make $8.23 and I don’t clear $10.10 it would be the
employer’s share and his responsibility to make up the difference of $10.10 minus the $8.23 an hour.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, I appreciate the answer. So how often is that calculation made, is that made per paycheck, is it made quarterly to determine whether or not additional money is owed by the employer. I mean, you know, so you’re serving and you work on a Tuesday night and it slow and you don’t have any business you are not getting any tips. Is that calculated immediately, does the employer owe that money in the next paycheck, how does that work?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

It is my understanding that it is done at the time they turn in their timecard.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Okay, understood. So in that next paycheck for that day, week, whatever the employer would owe an additional amount to get that employee up to the minimum wage. That is my understanding. Okay, thank you very much.

I would like to move on to another section of the Bill if we could. And it begins on line 144 and it involves displacing an employee in exchange for an employee receiving a lower rate. What is the genesis for this? I am trying to understand what we are trying to accomplish in this section of the Bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It is an effort to make sure that because of the subminimum wage that are paid to 16 and 17 year olds that there would be no displacement of workers that are 18 or older in exchange for hours or
position.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I appreciate that clarification. I do have a followup question. How long is the lookback period on that?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not believe that is addressed in the Bill.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I am an employer. I obviously implement the increase in the minimum wage and I very quickly find out that it is just costing me too much money, I have to let some people go. And unfortunately I have to do that. But
things start to pick up, maybe I pickup some new customers, however it happens I start to make a little bit more money. I want to hire more people. Let’s say that happens two or three months later. After those two or three months, I actually hire two more people but they happen to be under the age of 18 and they are making that lower wage. Would the individual I laid off earlier have a cause of action with the Department of Labor.

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That would be somethin determined by the Labor Commissioner through the regs and I do believe it is outlined in either section 2(b) or 3 (b) in this Bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PORTER (94TH): 2(b)
REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, thank you Mr. Speaker and again I thank the Chair of the Labor Committee for her answer to the question. That is a little bit concerning because now you’ve got a situation where employers perhaps want to hire somebody but are afraid to because they may end up being fined by the Department of Labor and that is a concern. I mean I keep on mentioning things that are a concern which is problematic in and of itself.

We’ve read quite a bit especially recently about the impact of minimum wage increases in other states, reports of job loss, reports of businesses closing, what analysis was given to other states, what attention was paid to other states and the impact of minimum wage increases in those states in the formulation of this legislation?

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

What I can’t say in response Mr. Speaker is
that the wage increases that have been given to the states around us and even as far as California have reported economic growth and activity since then.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you very much and while I hear what the Chair is saying you don’t have to do too much searching online to see reports that there are issues in New York City, there are issues in Massachusetts, there are issues in California largely in the restaurant and retail industry. I think of those industries and, you know, in my area of the State we are starting to see a big of resurgence in the restaurant, in retail world, we are seeing it in my hometown of Shelton. I look across the Housatonic River, you know, I see the town of Derby which is really starting to pickup it’s economic development efforts and I wonder what kind of impact this could have there and in that city’s ability to put new tenants into new buildings
given what is happening in other states. I look at the City of Ansonia, which is another great example, a town that has really seen a restaurant resurgence. Does this impact them? And I know that we got the tip-credit and I understand that but we also acknowledge that there are folks that work in those restaurants that would still have to see the increase in minimum wage. So I worry about towns like that in Connecticut that are really staring to see something happen and I am worried about what the impact of this will be on those towns. Will you see something negative happen on Main Street in Ansonia because of this? Will you see a slowdown of economic growth with the progress that is being made in Derby on Route 34 because of this? It is a concern especially in light of the fact that we are seeing problems in other states and I really think it is something we need to evaluate what has happened in other states and because of that Mr. Speaker with that I do have an Amendment.

The Clerk is in possession of an Amendment. It is LCO 8197. I ask that the Clerk please call it
and I be given leave to summarize.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO No. 8197 which will be designated as House Amendment Schedule “E”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “E” LCO No. 8197 offered by Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora, et al.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Seeing none, Representative Perillo please proceed.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Amendment strikes everything after the enacting clause and requires that the Labor Department within available appropriations conduct a study on the impact of minimum wage increases in other states around us and provide a synopsis of those results so that we can be better informed in making a determination as to whether or not the minimum wage should be increased.
That is my summarization. I would move adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Question before the Chamber is on adoption of the Amendment. Representative Perillo are you seeking a rollcall vote when this vote is taken?

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

I am indeed.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Granted. Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Would you like to remark further Representative Perillo? Please proceed.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Briefly, thank you very much and again because we are seeing states like New York, Massachusetts and California having problems in their restaurant and retail sectors, you know, I just don’t want to see a situation where you know, new stores are opening, trying to hire people, I don’t know what the store is selling, there is a restaurant selling food, the store selling Chia pets, I don’t know what they are selling but I don’t want to see this hurt them and I worry that if we don’t really have a full
understanding of how minimum wage increases in our surrounding states has impacted those businesses then we might be trying to do something good here and in the end be doing something bad. So that is the goal of this. It is not to hurt people it is to help people and more information I think is always better than less. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Representative Yaccarino of the 87th District, you have the floor, sir.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good morning, sir.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I stand in support of this Amendment. I’d like to speak sort of length as why I am in support of it. I own a retail business but before I get into my business, in the last year, Toys-R-Us has closed, Baby’s-R-Us has closed, Sears is in Chapter 11,
Sports Authority is closing its doors. This is around the country, Connecticut and the country. And in many retail businesses, our restaurants, our McDonald’s it is a struggle every day and I believe most businesses, most business owners want to pay their help as much as possible to have a thriving business. But what happens is you have the cost of overhead, labor, taxes, rent, mortgages, it’s a compounding effect. There’s federal taxes. So I think we need to look at this. We talk about the nonprofits earlier. I don’t think we took a true hard look at the negative impact on them. But I’ll give you an example. The local McDonald’s in North Haven and every town and every city has a McDonald’s. Most of the payroll is about $18,000 dollars a week. If you raise the minimum wage and the average salary is $11.80 and you can check, these are statistics, you can check with the Department of Labor, if you go from $11.80 up to $15 dollars in three or four years that manager’s payroll will go from $18,000 dollars a week to $23,250 dollars a week not counting the FUTA tax,
the FICA tax and the SUTA Tax with is another approximately 20 percent on top of that so that is approximately $30,000 dollars a week for payroll. So I think it is important to take a look at this. As far as my business, I have been in business for 27 years and like I said earlier my business, Representative Candelora’s business anybody that owned, opened a business started from scratch, we work almost hours like we work here because getting your business off the ground. So we all want to pay people as much as possible. My employees all get paid well actually and I am very fortunate to have them and they get bonuses, they get sick time, and they get paid time off. Just like at McDonald’s the workers that work at the local McDonald’s or Burger King or sandwich shop most of those folks get time off and it is the hours that they work for those companies fit their schedule and it is men and women, young and old. When I speak to high school students, I do it on a regular basis, they are afraid of the minimum wage going up because they are afraid that they are not gonna get a job, 95 percent
of our workers get paid above the minimum wage in this country. So you have your argument but I don’t think you are looking at the larger picture. The local McDonald’s, because I know for a fact he will lose 325 hours a week. So you want to seriously look at the impact, positive or negative, I think we should look at the study. Since I have been in this Chamber, I ran because of jobs, I want to promote jobs. If we are really serious about paying people much more than $15 dollars an hour, I said it last year on the Bridgeport Casino Bill, we should be looking at, and not just talking about once a year, but on a regular basis at manufacturing jobs, bioscience jobs in New Haven, in Bridgeport, in Hartford, in Waterbury. We have so much potential we will waste time on things that it is a laudable goal but it is not going to get people out of poverty. I visit these homeless shelters and they are going to get out of shelters at this wage. We have to be serious about this. I attended a bioscience conference yesterday with Commissioner Leman, Jim Smith, people from Yale, people from New
Haven. We need to look at expanding economy like Boston, like Maryland, like Tennessee, like so many other places but in the last nine years we do the same thing over, and over and we are not really helping the poor people, the middleclass people and the upper middleclass people. So you might have a laudable goal but it is not moving people forward and what is going to move people forward are polices that are sustainable, that get paid $25 dollars an hour, $30 dollars an hour. I feel passionate about it. We all want to pay people as much money as possible but this is, you have the right intent but I think you are looking at it very narrowly. I apologize for saying that but I think you are. My eldest son, he always argues, dad you gotta - he knows that I pay everyone really well. But Amazon where is the equity when Amazon they can pay $15 dollars an hour or they can pay more than $15 dollars an hour but the local mom and pop in New Haven, North Haven or Waterbury they are going to meet that same goal. There is no equity there. There is no equity there. So Sam’s, Walmart, Target
they can do it, they can raise their prices one/tenth of one cent but a struggling mom and pop or struggling local business that pays people well just, it’s gonna be harder to do. So I support this Amendment. I apologize for going on so long but I see a lot good and bad and I know you care but I just think you are going about it the wrong way. I feel we need to have growth, we have yet to come out of the recession. Every other state in the country has come out of recession but Connecticut. All you have to do is just look at it, all the box stores are closing and all we’re gonna do is help the larger companies and the smaller mom and pop, midsize companies that pay civic donations, little league, girl scouts, boy scouts, girls clubs, boys clubs, they are just gonna go under and I think we have to look at the negative impact. So thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. I feel very passionate about this. You know, we need to have jobs that people can really make a living on and again it is a laudable goal, I think we go there slowly, $12 dollars an hour, great but to go the way
you’re going, it’s not gonna just. I think there is going to be more negative impact than positive. So thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark on the Amendment before us? Again the board is lit up so if you want to speak on the Amendment, please stand up. Representative Delnicki of the 14th district. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good morning, sir.

Question for the proponent.

Through the speaker.

Representative Perillo, you’re about to get a question, sir prepare yourself. Representative Delnicki, please proceed.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is the proponent looking to gather in the way of information and results that might be useful in this entire issue?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you. Much of what we’ve heard from other states is simply news reports, reports of businesses hiring fewer employees specifically in the restaurant industry which I know is a little bit different for us because of the tip-credit in this Bill. But we’ve seen that in the City of New York and I will pull the information up because I don’t have it committed to memory, but in 2012 the restaurant was hiring at a rate of eight percent increases every year and now they are actually losing two percent every year. I think we need to understand those dynamics and determine how those dynamics would, if they would, play out here in the State of Connecticut especially as I referenced restaurants and retail. This is a big decision and we need to be well informed and because we have the benefit of states right around us who have done the same thing we can learn from that and determine
whether or not this is going to be as helpful as we hope or harmful which we don’t know, but we need to know that.

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
And through you.
What states specifically are you looking to find out this information from?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):
Sure, thank you, Mr. Speaker and I appreciate the question. Specifically in terms of states that are directly around us like Massachusetts and New York would be logical. We’ve also seen this, seen reports of problems with the minimum wage in California, a little bit of an economic dynamic in California but sure, why wouldn’t we want to
understand that. Why wouldn’t we want an extra year to get a report from the Department of Labor, hear what they have to say, hear what their findings are and determine whether or not again this is something we should be doing based on that information.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

A follow up on that. Would you also be looking at Rhode Island, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont, New Hampshire? Well New Hampshire probably wouldn’t be one of them because they actually repealed their increase in the minimum wage although it might be interesting to get information on what they did for their economy as either a plus or a minus as a follow up on the information available because that might also yield some interesting results pertaining to what occurs conversely when you actually retrench from having made that increase.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo did you hear? Are you okay? Representative Perillo please proceed sir.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

I did extract one from that yes. The gentleman actually makes a very good point and New Hampshire is an excellent example. A state that tired this and then decided it wasn’t the right thing to do. We actually just saw a report from the governor, a statement from the governor of New Hampshire, Governor Sununu saying that in his state he is pulling jobs from the State of Connecticut because he believes that in the State of New Hampshire they created a probusiness environment and in the State of Connecticut we have not. So let’s see whether or not they’re lower minimum wage is benefited their employees are benefits if we increase our minimum wage. We should know that information and the gentleman actually makes a very good point.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Delnicki.
REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Again I thank the proponent of this Amendment for the answers, knowledge obviously is power and we need as much knowledge as possible going into this situation here. I commend him for the Amendment and I certainly will support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Piscopo of the 76th District, sir you have the floor.

REP. PISCOPO (76TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I was here when the proponent brought the Bill out, the Chairwoman of Labor and she explained why she felt this Bill was a good Bill. She had good intentions but I think what we have been trying to do here in the hours that have gone after the Chairwoman brought the Bill out, I think what we’re trying to do is trying to bring up some of the unintended consequences, some of the real concerns we had with this Bill. And, you know, stuff like the rate of
the increase of the minimum wage, the indexing, the nonprofits, the effect on seasonal employees. You know, we’re just trying to bring up some of the real concerns we have and the unintended consequences of this Bill and you know, try to offer some Amendments and it just doesn’t seem to be working but we’re trying. And so to that end, while I’m not a real fan of studies I think this is just a good alternative. I mean it just seems to be the only logical alternative at this stage in the game. So I hope the members could see right to vote for this Amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule “E”? Representative Davis of the 57th District, sir you have the floor.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good morning, sir.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):
If I may, a question or two to the proponent of the Amendment.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo looks completely prepared. Representative Davis please proceed.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I notice in the Amendment discussion conducting a study of the impact of the minimum wage increases. And through you, Mr. Speaker.

What kind of impact, what are we looking for? Impact on the employees, impact on the employers, impact on the State, on the general economy, what kind of impact are you looking to do with the Department of Labor?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Well I don’t have the text of the Amendment in front of me because I just gave it to Representative Davis but the impact I’m talking about is actually
all of the above. The impact on job growth, the impact on job attrition, the impact on upward pressure on wages outside of those jobs that are actually subject to the minimum wage, all things that we need to know, specifically are our people going to lose jobs because of this. That is really what this comes down to, Mr. Speaker are people going to lose jobs. We certainly don’t want to see that. Everybody in this Chamber wants to see people keep their jobs and ideally make more money, can we do both at the same time. That needs to be understood and that’s the goal.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And in line 10 it calls for a synopsis of the minimum wage increases in the surrounding states.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What would you be looking for in the synopsis?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo.
REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Well a synopsis would generally be a summary so I would expect a report from the Department of Labor in some way, shape or form that would give us a snapshot of what is happening in other states, what the impact on job growth has been in other states and what the impact on the economy has been in other states, whether or not jobs have left, whether or not employers have laid off employees, whether or not new businesses have come in because of it or left because of it. I would expect that report, the synopsis in the form of a report to be presented.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

To the proponent of the Bill, where it talks about the impact of the minimum wage increases and I think Representative from South Windsor in his questioning kind of eluded to this as well like a state like New Hampshire that actually reduced their
minimum wage to the Federal level would this also look into that as well, not just simply the increases but also the impact of decreases in the minimum wage and what impact that could have on businesses or on the employees themselves?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Perillo, I’m trusting you got a question there too?

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Indeed sir, yes. Now it would include that and it should, you can’t just evaluate a couple of states you really need to get a good picture of what is going on in as many states as possible. Obviously there is a bit of a time crunch so can you evaluate all 50 probably not but there ought to be a good cross-section of which states are evaluated, some that are comparable especially in this region New Hampshire being one of them.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in support of this Amendment and it seems to be common sense to me for us to look at this a little bit closer especially since it doesn’t limit it to just what the impact of $15 minimum wage would be but maybe just a small increase to give a little bit to an employee and what that impact would be on the employee and on the business and to see if that is actually appropriate to help move our economy forward or if other increases are necessary or what kind of impact they would have even be actually detrimental to the economy in the State of Connecticut if those go into place. So for those reasons, I will be supporting the Amendment here this morning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule “E” Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do again appreciate the sentiment of this and I would just like to ask
my colleagues to please support me in voting no on this Amendment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all members voted? If all the members please check the board to insure your vote has been properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

LCO 8197 designated House “E”

Total Number Voting 142
Necessary for Adoption 72
Those voting Yea 59
Those voting Nay 83
Absent not voting 8

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Amendment is rejected [Gavel]. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended?

Representative Ackert of the 8th District, sir you have the floor.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

A couple of questions for clarification. We’ve had some good dialogue already and I thank the good Chair for her answers and I just want to go back for clarity on lines 51 to 57 before I get into my, some comments. And it dealt with, I got the understanding many, many times I go and speak to whether it is high school students or young entrepreneurs and I talk to them about actually getting and try to get into a company before they possibly jump into college or commit to a field that
they might not be comfortable, try to get an
internship and try out the job sort of say before
you spend a lot of money in college. And then I was
curious because in the original language the rates
for learners and beginners so, that to me would be
interns so actually having a paid intern rather than
a free intern why did we change that to an age
appropriate, you know, under 18?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

What were the thoughts on that?

Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, madam speaker. If he could just
give me that question rephrased for a little more
clarity?

Through you.

Thank you.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Absolutely, Madam Speaker. And I apologize
for not being clear on it. I guess what I am
looking at is, if we are looking to train people sometimes you want to bring them in or they approach you and I encourage this all the time. When I speak to people about trying to get into a field that they may be interested in before they maybe take on that $100,000 debt to go to college. Maybe try something you would like to do. So that would be a beginner or a learner. And I was curious if they are over the age of 18 that they would not be able for the learners wage or what used to be called and why was the thought on that.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you, Representative Ackert.

Representative Ackert I didn’t want to interrupt you but in the future you could direct your question to me, through me to the proponent I would appreciate it. Thank you, sir. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you.

And through madam speaker.

That was decided because we were actually able
to negotiate that. We did that, we eliminated that beginners and learners wage because we were able to expand the training wage for the 16 and 17 year olds.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate that and will ask the questions through you. Thank you. And then the follow up on this, so the minimum wage though of that is 85 percent or $10.10 per hour?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

If he is referring to the elimination of the beginning and learners that would be the minimum wage which is $10.10.

Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):
Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you. Cause earlier in the evening actually yesterday, actually at the beginning of the conversation you had said that the, the good lady had said that there would be a potential savings for those that took advantage of this wage, maybe at a nonprofit, a municipality and I believe you had said there would be a savings but right now we are at $10.10 and that the least amount that they would pay would be $10.10 and I was just wanting clarity on that.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Is that what was stated earlier and is there potential savings for those that have these employees?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you.
Through you, Madam Speaker.

The savings that I was referring to were savings that would be derived from the 16 and 17 year olds expanding that training wage from 200 hours to 90 days.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And the way I believe the current language today being is that you can get an individual that would be paid this amount 85 percent of $10.10 would obviously less than $10.10 so what we are actually doing because it is $10.10 it says, it would be $10.10, 85 percent or $10.10 whichever is greater so I don’t see where the savings would be and I was confused at the origin because 85 percent is less than $10.10 no matter how many days you have it run and then at $10.10 for 90 days is what the minimum wage is now.

Through you.

Is that correct?
Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I am not sure what the good Representative is trying to say in that question but I’m gonna try to see if I can be more clear on the section that he is actually talking about here and the purpose of that 85 percent of the $10.10. If you go to $11.25 you wouldn’t be losing anything at the minimum wage.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

And I guess my question to the good gentleman would be does that make sense?

Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you and now with the fact that yes, if it was that we raised the minimum wage on inception of the date, that of course that they could reduce it down to $10.10 it would save them money. I was
referring it to today’s dates and rates so that is what I was referring to so, I am clear on it and we’re just looking at it in a different manner. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank the good lady for her answers on that. I think a lot of the other sections were indepthly discussed earlier tonight and into this morning so I probably won’t have, I might have an apprenticeship question but I’d like to talk a little bit about those businesses that have asked me to speak on their behalf here in this Chamber if this Bill had come.

And it’s here. Local grocery store that I have in town actually was outside, pulled out back in my hometown and he pulled me outside and he said, “you got a second to chat”, just happened to run some numbers and I said yeah, I’d be happy to you know, cause as many of us go out we’ll go to a local business, a grocery store, usually they have, take a chance to bend our ear and we always appreciate that. I think as legislators, we put ourselves in that position and we always like to hear what individuals have to say. He said, “I ran the numbers, Tim and
my little local grocery store if we go to $15 dollars an hour I will pay just less than $250,000 dollars more in income”, local small grocery store, $250,000 dollars more. So if we just take the first two jumps of this piece of legislation it means slightly under $100,000 dollars a year that he would have to pay more in income in his business not just himself, of course, his business. And he literally looked at me and he looked at the people that were retrieving carts in the parking lot and that were baggin the groceries and he said, what that does, I have to compete with the larger grocery stores in the area and they are a little bit higher as it is now in prices and he says, “I have to compete with them, they are already driving an extra five minutes to go save, you know, a few dollars and he gets that, he understands that they have to drive a little further and save a little bit of money, he said but I want to be their local one. I want to hire that local person that carries the groceries to the elderly person or anybody to their car. I want to do that. He’s got such a reputation of taking
care of the young people in town, the kids that come back from college, they always get rehired for the summer when they are a little bit busier and at the holidays, you go there at Thanksgiving time and they are packed and he’s got more young people working there because they came home from college to spend their time and they earned a little bit of money and he appreciates that.

To that middle-aged woman that is running the cashier. He said that is probably half a dozen to ten jobs in my small business that part-time jobs. He said so that is what you will see here rather than 50 employees he will have 40 something, near 40. He said I just can’t offer the services that I would be able to do if this happens, if this legislation passes. And that bothered him a lot. He said I could possibly keep them on and cut their benefits. These are the decisions that are being made out there on small businesses, reducing benefits, reducing jobs. I do have a small business; I won’t talk about that just yet. My vehicle needed tires, my van needed tires, worn them
as long as I could till they became just about bald
and, you know, riding in a tire clinic and the tire
company and I’m pullin in and of course he knows my
job, my two jobs, actually two of my three jobs. I
walked in there and he said, “Hey got a minute?
Same thing, pulled me outside the store and said I’d
like to chat with you for just a moment. I’d be
happy to. Great small company again he hires a lot
of local people and he said, “See that young man
right there that’s working on your van”, I said
yeah. “Just hired him. Windom Tech graduate,
excellent kid, shows up on time, cordial to the
customers, well trained from the technical school
that we went to.” You know what happens if the
minimum wage hires, Tim. I only sell so many tires.
People buy ‘em online now, I can’t compete. He said
but it is the service that I provide to my customers
that they appreciate. You go there you barely have
to wait because he has enough employees to take care
of it now. I love that young man and he says to me,
that is the person I will let go because I can’t
charge anymore but that’s the choice I’ll have to
make. At times I get to play golf, lately not so much, usually not during session obviously. And so there has been raining not so much. So I was talking to the golf course owner again said, “Tim, you know who I hire here don’t ‘ya?” I said yeah you got some local guys that take care of the carts, some do the driving range and he said, “I’m not gonna be able to afford some of these young people.” He says that first and foremost business is tough right now and not a lot of people playing golf, less players, less people in the area have time to do that, they are either working or the money is just not there. The economy is just not great folks if anybody has remembered that. We’re talking job losses again. Somebody not hiring somebody and bringing them back. Maybe it’s the person that’s gonna make the hamburgers that the owner is gonna have to do it now. It’s not creating jobs, it’s losing jobs. My nephew, this kid is an aggressive young man. Four years ago he started buying Subway Stations, those sandwich shops. He now has five Subway’s I believe. He works like a fiend. He has
quite a few employees. He took me aside just recently during one of the family gatherings for birthday, “Uncle Tim, what are you guys doing in Hartford to us, I heard about the minimum wage increase. I thought we had this beat last year.” He says, “I only can sell so many sandwiches.” And if you ever hear about the $5 dollar footlongs, they don’t do them anymore which he is grateful for. He says we barely make anything on these sandwiches. We have to sell a lot of sandwiches and a lot of sodas, we have to. He says with all the employees I have; you know that that means? It means I’ve got to work even longer hours, never mind managing the stores I have I have got to work longer hours, pick up a shift. My quality of life changes. My wife who right now comes in when we need her. We then have to get a sitter. He said I’m gonna have to let somebody go, probably in each of the stores. I just don’t have the money to pay more wages. All they’re doing is making sandwiches, Uncle Tim. It’s not that hard, I appreciate their work, it’s hard to keep ‘em. We train ‘em and they go off to other
places which is fine. He says but it is gonna cost jobs.

For years in this Chamber both sides of the aisle have worked to create jobs. We have worked to create jobs. We haven’t done a very good job. I’ve been here, I take part blame in that to. We haven’t done a good job. We’ve given companies hundreds and hundreds of millions of tax dollars in tax breaks to create a couple of hundred jobs. I just talked about four businesses, four businesses that they are gonna let go of people. I don’t remember talking about legislation here that people said they were going to let go of people because they just can’t afford it. I’m not the only who talked about it today. What we need is a vibrant economy. We need a trained workforce. That brings me to my company. I have a small business. Everybody makes over minimum wage. You want to know why? They are trained. They have job skills. They are a value to my company and my customers. That’s how we raise wages folks. We get people trained. We give ‘em job opportunities and we create a vibrant economy
not a stagnant economy. We got to look at ways that we get a smarter harder working valued workforce for our employees, for our employers and that is how we bump the economy up. The good Chairman mentioned that higher wages created economy but not through handing it out, providing opportunities at a better value for the workforce out there. The companies. That’s what you need to do. I look forward to working on that type of legislation this year and hopefully that we can work together and come up with a way to do that. I don’t believe this legislation does that, madam speaker so I will be a no. thank you for the time.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me and I do have a few questions and concerns to the proponent of the Bill.

Through you, Madam Speaker.
ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter will you prepare yourself, madam. Representative Sredzinski you may proceed, sir.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The question has been asked and answered, a lot of my questions have already been addressed and I plan on not asking any repeat questions. I hope that makes the Chairwoman a little bit happy about that. One of the questions that was asked and answered had to do with the exceptions and who will we will be exempting from the Bill. I understand the restaurant workers and the bartenders. There was some language in the Bill about hotel employees. My concern is about some of the nonprofit employees and I know we had an amendment that would have excluded nonprofit employers from this Bill so just for clarification, are nonprofit employees still included in the underlying Bill as we are voting on this morning?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I appreciate the answer. In line 51 and 52 it talks about the training rate we will call it for persons under the age of 18. One of the questions that I’ve had during the debate was that I assume that for 16 and 17 year olds in high school they are obviously getting their first job, maybe it’s a seasonal job, maybe it’s a second job, but they are still very young and learning skills and they have not yet even graduated high school. So those would be considered a low skill employee, an entry level employee and as a result of not having much experience, not having much education, those employees if they have jobs would be considered subminimum wage or training wage jobs. However if any of those students were to turn
18 automatically, according to the Bill, they would automatically be granted the minimum wage. So the question to the proponent of the Bill is was there any consideration to amending it or including language that included information about graduating high school as trigger to receive the minimum wage?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I can’t remember off the top of my head, it may have been but I can’t say absolutely.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I thank the good Chairwoman for her answers. She will probably be happy to know that I am not planning on introducing an amendment. What I’m doing that right now for discussion purposes and legislative intent only.
Moving on to line 53 and 54, the question about the hours versus days was already asked by the Representative from the 113th District. However and I appreciated the answer about its easier to calculate days versus hours. However further clarification I was seeking is that there are plenty of jobs out there that have, you know, atypical hours. It could be a four hour shift, it could be a two hour shift, it could be a 12 hour shift. The 90 days that is included in this language is obviously new to this section of the statutes. For the good Chairwoman, what does that 90 days represent?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

The 90 days represents the training wage.

Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):
Thank you, Madam Speaker. I’ll try to be a little bit more clear in my question. So does the 90 days, is that 90 days from the date of hire?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And for clarification on that, if someone were to be hired and work 12 hours a week, I’m sorry, 12 hours a day, not to get to the overtime level of 40 hours per week, but if they were to work those many hours, the 90 days would still apply according to the statute. Is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

That is correct.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you for the clarification and would this also apply to part-time or per diem staff in the same way?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And for the purposes of negotiation with the Governor’s office as I understand that is why we are at the 90 day language as opposed to if you were to do simple math and say,
90 days times the typical eight hour day is 720 hours. So the 720 hours wasn’t included in the Bill the thought was the 90 days would be a compromise that would be greater to achieve the end results of the Bill which is passaged?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes, madam speaker, it was considered to be easier calculation in helpin to administer this language.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I thank the Chairwoman for her answers and for just one more part of clarification on that one section about the 90 days. Is there anything that would prevent let’s say a seasonal worker, I know that the discussion was had earlier that 90 days was chosen by the
Governor’s Office or by the proponents and negotiators of this Bill because 90 days is typical summer, so three months, that three month period. Let’s say for example there was someone who works seasonally, including the summer, but also outside of the summer months in maybe the fall or the winter, maybe it’s an agricultural operation, maybe it’s a tree farm, pumpkin farm, so if that 90 days were to happen in the summer would there be any consideration to stopping employment and restarting and if that were to be the case. Let me rephrase that to make sure I’m clear. So make sure I’m clear, it’s 3:30, it’s 4:30, it’s early in the morning and I want to make sure I’m clear in my questions.

So, through you, Madam Speaker.

Is there any issue with some of?

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Please proceed, Representative Piscopo.

REP. PISCOPO (76TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam speaker, a point of order. We do not have a quorum, Masons
Part 5, chapter 14, Quorum Section 500, subsection (1). We do not have a quorum. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you, sir. The House will stand-at-ease.

The House will come back to order [Gavel].

Representative Piscopo, it is in the opinion of the Chair that we now have a quorum. Thank you, sir. Representative Sredzinski, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Where was I? [Laughter] I’m tempted to start over but I won’t. So getting back to my question, I was clarifying and make sure I’m clear. The 90 days of someone who is employed under the training wage, is there anything to prevent an employer from hiring someone for a period, seasonally, terminating and hiring them back to prevent having to pay the full minimum wage per this statute?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I believe, and I’m just gonna, I’m gonna get back to you just to make sure that I’m clear on what you’re askin. You want to know if the employer, if I’m workin for someone before the 90 day period is up, they let me go. And then they hire me back, or they hire another employee?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):

Thank you and I appreciate the clarifying question. So I to, I love when I talk about legislation, I always use hypotheticals cause I find it to be the easiest way to explain intent of the law. So in this case, let’s say I’m a seasonal employee and I’m working at a Christmas tree farm and for the Christmas season I am working for 80 days just because that is the length of the season. And then the Christmas tree farm no longer has any business for me, no hours. And so I in effect
terminate by employment. I either resign or I am let go and laid off and then summertime comes along and it’s strawberry season or blueberry season or whatever the case may be and they want to hire me back. It’s not an intentional termination or letting go just so they don’t have to pay that wage, but could it be something that business could get caught into. So it wouldn’t be intentional, it wouldn’t be malicious but it would be one of those unintended consequences that was mentioned earlier by the Representative from the 76th District. So would that example qualify in this Bill, madam speaker?

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

   Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

   Through you, Madam Speaker.
   That is not addressed in the Bill.
   Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

   Representative Sredniński.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):
Thank you, Madam Speaker. In some of my discussions with nonprofits especially nonprofits surrounding day camps, vacation camps they often pay or compensate some of their workers through stipends which work out better for both the employee and the employer because paying an hourly rate for someone who is doing let’s say a weekend trip makes less sense because, yes while they are technically on the clock, they would be getting paid for resting, for sleeping, for recreation time, so stipends are often paid. Is there anything in this Bill that would address someone being paid by stipend versus just the hourly rate which we seen in this Bill?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

No.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH):
Thank you, Madam Speaker. The reason I ask some of these questions is that specifically in my district and for the good Chairwoman if she would care to have a seat and relax, I’m just gonna kinda make some comments, so I know it’s been a long arduous evening into morning. The reason I bring up these points and ask these questions for clarification is that in my district the 112th District of Monroe and Newtown we have a YMCA, the Lakewood Trumbull YMCA that is located on the Trumbull Monroe line and also has a camp facility on State Route 59 and this particular Bill is going to impact that YMCA and to be honest it is going to impact all of the statewide YMCAs in the entire State of Connecticut and potentially in a very negative way. I know that there have been measures to address some of the concerns especially concerning the minimum wage workers that are under the age of 18 with the training wage and I do appreciate that. I am glad to see that in the Bill however the districts, the YMCA in my district still has significant concerns about the overall cost of
doing business and I think that is something that
we’ve heard not only over and over again this
morning and this past session but through the past
five years that I’ve been in the Chamber. We’ve
heard a lot about the cost of doing business in the
State of Connecticut and I think it is important to
realize that even though some of the intentions
behind this minimum wage increase is to address for
profit major corporations where we see or we hear
that people say that these large corporations are
making billions in profits and their workers are not
being compensated fairly. While I understand that
argument, when we apply this minimum wage increase
across the State of Connecticut we are also
targeting programs such as the Lakewood Trumbull
YMCA which offers things like fitness classes,
spots, childcare services and summer camp. The YMCA
in Monroe is open seven days a week, it’s open for
16 hours during the weekdays, it is open on
Saturdays and Sundays and includes programs for not
only children but adults as well. And I have
specific numbers that indicate that over 700 youths
in not only, [Clears throat] excuse me, not only Monroe but the region including Bridgeport, Trumbull, Shelton, Easton, Fairfield also attend some of the YMCA classes and the underlying reason that they exist and the function they perform is to really foster childhood development and provide a service for parents that are working, working either regular jobs, or working multiple jobs, or have a serving before or after school services. Some of the services they provide for schools, after school before school there is over 130 children in my community that attend one of the two elementary schools for their before or their after school programs. That is 130 children with parents who either need assistance before school or after school to make their ends meet so they can pay their bills, so that they can go run their businesses, perhaps provide employment to others throughout the State of Connecticut and the school care programs offer multiple different kinds of services, everything from homework help, to arts and crafts, to fitness, to healthy eating habits and the YMCA employs
approximately 20 part-time staff members that help
to care for these children before and after school.
Not all of them are minimum wage, but a significant
number of them are minimum wage. And we hear about
what the minimum wage could do to help some of the
folks in our communities that are relying on that
minimum wage and certainly increase in the minimum
wage would provide more money in the pocket of those
who do receive the minimum wage but there is also
another side of it. With the increase in minimum
wage could just result, just to the Trumbull YMCA is
just a decrease in before or after school services,
a loss in jobs due to the employee costs of the
organization and if the YMCA doesn’t cut hours then
they have to increase the prices they charge the
parents who are dropping off their kids which would
lead unfortunately to parents not being able to
afford dropping their kids off or leaving them at
school to be cared for by the YMCA programs and this
is a service, again that provides this care where
parents then can go to work, they can be at work
early, they can be at work late to provider for jobs
elsewhere in the State of Connecticut, to provide for a boost in the economy. Further if a drop in staffing happens that means less quality attention and we all know the results of what happens when class sizes increase or when nursing home staff is cut. It means that there is more students, more children, more patients to the amount of staff and that simply becomes a dry in the quality. And while I appreciate the proponent’s intention of the Bill I certainly don’t believe that the intention behind this Bill before us this morning is to try to reduce services or try to limit the amount of time that counselors can spend with kids, or to prevent parents from being able to afford daycare, after school services, summer vacation camps. There is nothing in this Bill that would indicate that that is the intention of the Bill, therefore I think it is important to point out some of these unintended consequences that undoubtedly will result in some of these issues. One of the other services that the YMCA provides is a day camp service. This is something that I visited multiple occasions,
normally in the summertime and the one thing that I notice is all the high school aged children whether they are 16, 17 or 18 and they are employed happily by the organization to provide care, to provide instruction. There is a ropes course, there is a pond, there is a pool, there is a bike there is plenty of things for the children to on a day to day basis when most parents in my community are at work, whether they are running their own business or working for another employer and this gives them the freedom and more importantly than the freedom but the comfort to know that they are able to drop their child off somewhere where they are not only receiving instructional care but they are also receiving physical activity. They are doing things that are testing their minds, their bodies and having that be jeopardized in anyway is a concern for me and a concern for my entire community. Again, many of these counselors this is their first job ever and they enjoy the fact that they are out there with younger kids, that they are out there in the pond with a boat teaching them how to fish or
walking the trails on the camp to show them stuff about the tress and the ferns and hedges and all the stuff they do on their nature walks. It is a benefit that the community truly enjoys and provides such a critical service. This Bill with that increase in the minimum wage again could result in a loss of some of those jobs. The Representative from Shelton from the 113th District talked about that $100 dollars. Well that $100 dollars doesn’t change based on the rate that you pay. The only way that rate chances that $100 dollars changes in order to pay your employees more is to increase the amount of revenue and in this case that would mean an increase in revenue of the parents that are spending the money to have their kids taken care of. And I think it is important for and I have focused a lot on the Trumbull YMCA and the services they provide but it is not just my YMCA in my local community, it is statewide and statewide the YMCAs are dedicated to youth development, healthy living including physical activity, nutritional eating, core values which are very important to the organization of caring,
honest, respect, responsibility. Now who in this building can’t support the idea of kids getting exposed to caring, honesty, respect and responsibility? I think all of us know the value of those values on a day-to-day basis and I know that I instill it in the people I meet and my son. These values that are so important to not just learning on a day-to-day basis but living and being a good member of our society.

Also I think it is important to note that the YMCAs have a very strong social responsibility policy. They do take private donations, anyone in this Chamber or anyone in the State of Connecticut, anyone in the world can sponsor kids to go to day camp, can sponsor kids to go to these programs. They offer financial assistance. That is the type of program, that financial assistance, that is the type of thing that gets cut when expenses need to be adjusted, when they need to look at revenues versus expenses and what that’s gonna do and I would hate to see any child prevented from going to one of these services because of an increase in minimum
wage that we do here tonight. And again I firmly believe that the proponent of this Bill does not intend to have these consequences exist, that is not the intention however we know all to well that legislation has a widespread impact and that our decisions are can have a ripple effect across the State of Connecticut. As I talked about the fees that the YMCAs charge I found them to be extremely reasonable. As we all know the cost of childcare can be extraordinary depending on what type of childcare you seek and the hours that you need. What I really found remarkable, and I learned about this, in my research for this, is that from a low fee of $200 dollars for a Y member three days a week, it allows you to drop your child off early or keep them late at school. Now if you need more coverage they provide that, you can go up to five days a week before and after school. So five days a week before and after schools, less than $500 dollars a month. Now these figures in my opinion knowing how much daycare costs these figures are extremely reasonable and able to do this because of
support from the community, because of support from their members. These fees will undoubtedly be forced to rise and when these fees rise that pushes the cost of their services up which I hope will not exclude anyone from the market from being able to afford these services. But, unfortunately I find that that might be one of the unintended consequences of this Bill. And as I was doing my research on not only my local YMCA, I came across some numbers that really demonstrated how widespread and how far reaching YMCAs provide for services in our State of Connecticut. Over 128,000 youth experience value based programs each year. Over 128,000 sharing those values that I talked about earlier respect, responsibility, caring. What’s even more remarkable over 156,000 adults are in these programs. There is more adults that are receiving programs from the YMCA than there are children. Now you wouldn’t know that by going to my local YMCA whereby far the children outnumber the adults but to know that they’re statewide that many adults taking part in these programs was simply
remarkable. The after school programs and in my case at the Trumbull Monroe YMCA the before school programs almost 15,000 students a month, I’m sorry, a year - 15,000 students a year are enrolled in these programs. Again this is the critical service that gets provided before or after school that helps parents take care of their kids and not only gives them instruction, homework help, arts and crafts, physical activity it also provides a confidence in the parents. When they drop their child off they know that they are dropping off their child with a certified, trained, background checked employee that is gonna care for their child. Almost 5,000 children enrolled in preschool enrichment programs. Now why is this important as we all know preschool is a very important part of a childhood development. Before kindergarten many parents struggle finally figure out what to do with their children and childcare and again it can get very expensive.

Another number that really struck me was the number of staff that YMCAs have statewide. Almost 8,000 employees statewide, 8,000 employees fulltime,
part-time, providing services for children, providing services for adults. It’s something that taken piecemeal might not be a huge impact so if I just think about my local YMCA I’ll think about the programs in the summertime, I’ll think about the day school, the day camp, the before and after school programs but when you look at the numbers statewide there are YMCAs all over the State of Connecticut from Chester, to Stamford, to Westport, to Mystic, to Torrington, Winsted, New Britton, Naugatuck and the list goes on, and on, and on. And I know that each one of use in this room whether they are freshman legislators or seasoned legislators, I know they have heard of the YMCAs and I know that this concerns and brought to them and I think it is important that we think about that and that we consider that as we develop our budget, as we consider taking a vote on this Bill. The reason I spent so much time talking about not only my local YMCA but the statewide YMCA is because this will undoubtedly, this Bill if passed, will undoubtedly be an enormous fiscal impact on Connecticut’s YMCAs.
The financial impact to a $15 dollar per hour minimum wage could be up to $4 million dollars. Now that is assuming that the training wage would not apply so based on the training wage information that we got with our new version of the LCO I am confident that that number would be decreased. However we are still talking about millions of dollars, statewide to YMCAs that simply are providing a service to our youth and I forgot to mention earlier that Care4Kids is a bid part of that and I know that’s a program that is near and dear to a lot of the people in this room. I think most of us, if not all of us would agree, that childcare is unaffordable in many ways. Increasing the minimum wage will make childcare at this level even less affordable, more expensive. And unfortunately the YMCAs will have little choice but to increase their fees, reduce their staffing, provide for less service than they do now and I know I spent a good amount of time talking about those services because I think it is important to know exactly what these organizations are doing, what the agencies are
responsible for, the fact that they have hundreds of thousands of lives in their hands every single day. And that is something that we need to consider to make sure that they are not left out when this Bill passes and they are left standing saying, you didn’t think about us. Well we can’t say that. We’ve thought about you, we’re listening and I hope that my fellow colleagues who understand that this impact is gonna be significant. This proposal will be detrimental on several levels to the YMCAs across our State of Connecticut. I hope that my colleagues think long and hard about casting their vote in favor of this Bill in light of the fact that they would be hurting not only the nonprofits like the YMCA but all nonprofits in the State of Connecticut. Thank you, Madam Speaker for the time. I want to thank the good Chairwoman for the answers to my questions. I urge my colleagues to reject this Bill. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the
Bill as Amended? Representative Wilson Pheanious, you have the floor madam.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD):

Good morning, madam speaker and thank you. I rise in support of HB 5004 and I do it after having listened to some seven hours or maybe a little bit more of testimony where there has been very little support. I have heard many things. I have heard about faceless hardworking employers who are struggling to make ends meet and create jobs. I’ve heard about the equities or the inequities between the big boxes and the mom and pops that are trying to survive. I’ve heard about nonprofits whose mission is reaches for the skies to take care of people as the gentleman was just discussing. I’ve heard about state funded budgets that don’t adequately support any of those nonprofits to do the important work that they do. I’ve heard about insurmountable fixed costs of business, sadly employers struggling to make ends meet in their business. I’ve heard that $15 dollars is not a living wage, will not, is not for us a living wage,
and so the implication sort of being then why should we do anything. I’ve heard about kids 16 and 17 year olds and disabled people that might be without jobs. What I haven’t heard very much about is the workers who create the wealth that we are struggling with, that we are struggling to hold on to. The peoples who meager wages go 100 percent into building our economy, 100 percent of the money of the people that make minimum wages goes back into the economy. And what about the faceless child, not just the faceless employer who is struggling, what about the child whose cold, hungry or home unattended because his mother and his father are struggling to, at minimum wage jobs where they are working 40-50 hours a week sometimes, not hearing a lot about him. What about the equity between the employers and the employees or the lack of equity? I hear a lot of discussion about so many of these things and I think about the fact of fixed costs of employers. We heard a lot about that. We heard about the many things that cannot be avoided by employers but I’ve heard very little discussion
about the fixed costs of a family. The rent, the food, the childcare, the transportation the things that somebody who is making $10 dollars an hour cannot afford to pay. So we’ve heard many of these things in the last seven hours and frankly it angers me. It angers me that a woman or a man should have to work 60 hours and not be able to make ends meet that they should have to go home to a child that they haven’t seen that they can barely afford to feed. That makes me mad. That makes me mad that somebody would work 60 hours and be eligible for welfare, be eligible to take State assistance and we have to pay for that because they are not making enough money to live. That is what a minimum wage is supposed to do. Your job is supposed to be your safety net and right now it isn’t. It can’t be because we are not paying enough money. So I guess I would have to say to you that there must be something wrong with the pararhyme, there is something wrong with this picture, there is something wrong with the business model we’re using if we have to have people working as hard as they
are and not being able to live. There are some changes that we have to make. Why is it that 90 percent of the income or more in our economy is in the hands of probably five percent of the people or less? There is something wrong with that picture. Why is it that we never, than all the times that this minimum wage issues has come up that, you know, its going along party lines most of the time as you look back over the years and we’re comin up with the same empty hands for the people at the bottom. Everybody knows that there are two Connecticut’s. People don’t quite seem to understand why. It’s because half of them are working, you know, I heard someone talking about Simon Legree a little earlier and it harkened me back to thinking, you know, we have a system that is a lot like Simon used to have where some people are doing an awful lot of work, not being adequately paid and then being devalued because they are inadequately paid. A minimum wage is supposed to be, yes, working toward a living wage, but if you’re hungry, if you’re starving and somebody offers you half a meal, it is, should you
turn it down and say, you can’t give me the whole meal. Personally I’d rather take that and work toward the $19 dollars that we know that someone needs in this society to live. No, we can’t get there yet but we have to start somewhere and we can’t always start in the middle or at the top. We’ve got to start at the bottom where most of the people are. And that is what a minimum wage is supposed to try to accomplish. So, it’s hard to sit here and listen to seven hours of testimony where nobody seems to be making the point on behalf of the worker. And believe me I am not trying to suggest that anything that I’ve heard that there is not validity to the points that have been made. The point I am making is that so little has been talked about the people who create that wealth, the people at the bottom who are working every day, every day, every night to try to just have a life, a decent life without welfare, without somebody taking care of them because they can take care of themselves. I think we have to look at the design that we are using. I think that there is something wrong when
all of the monies is at the top and none of it is at the bottom and we can’t afford to make changes because we put too much pressure on the middle. There is something wrong with that picture and it just seems to me, like all of the talk that we’ve had in here tonight about just how bad things are for everyone had left out the people that are the worst off, the people who are creating the wealth. You know, when you own a business, I heard someone say it’s your employees who are the value. It is, those are the people who make your business and yet those are the people that we are sending home without adequate, without adequate money so that they can support their families. So, where do we start? Where do you start when what we have is apparently so inadequate for the people who are doing all of the work at the bottom of the totem pole? They are the ones that are holding the rest of us up. When is it goin to be their turn? I don’t see any answers. I think we need to give some serious thought to this issue and there has been plenty of thought give and I don’t mean to suggest
that. I appreciate the work of the Chairman of this Committee. I appreciate the work of everybody in this Chamber who I know is struggling for what they believe they to be best but I want you to think about the people at the very bottom who have nothing, who have practically nothing except their own labor and that they need to be adequately compensated. I want you to think about those nonprofits who have missions that they can’t sustain because they are fighting poverty paying poverty wages. It isn’t reasonable and I think, I think some thought and energy has to be put into that. I listened to 12 hours of testimony and sure there were employers that came forth and talked about the fact that, you know, this was gonna be difficult for them and maybe they would have to change their business design and maybe they would have to lay some people off and maybe they have to raise their prices. And those things seem to be legitimate to me but in that, probably ten of that 12 hours of testimony I heard from mothers who could just barely manage their households and feed their kids or had
to leave them alone or had to, you know, give up a meal silently so that their kids could eat when they are working 40-50 hours a week. That is not the Connecticut we ought to have. That is not the America I want and we have to start somewhere. So if that means we have to change the way our businesses are designed, if we have to maybe have fewer employees and pay the ones that we have adequately then I think that’s a step we have to take. So, I don’t have a question for the good Chairman because I’ve heard eight hours of questions repeated questions and what I haven’t heard is the kind of consideration that we ought to be giving to Connecticut’s low wage workers who need a minimum wage, need a minimum wage that gets them to a living wage, that allows them to live in the State of Connecticut that we love. So I support this Bill and I support the employers that are gonna have to struggle to make this Bill work but I mostly support the workers who are hold the rest of us up and I thank you for your attention.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):
Thank you, madam. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative D’Amelio of the 71st District.

REP. D'AMELIO (71ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and good morning to you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Good morning to you, sir.

REP. D'AMELIO (71ST):

You know, the beautiful thing about this Chamber is we all come from a different walk of life and all of our experiences together makes this State move forward. We have disagreements on different Bills. I do come from the business sector. I’ve been self-employed my entire life. I’ve owned a business for the last 36 years. This is the third business I’m in currently. I started off when I was 19 years old. I know what the struggles are. I also know the struggles of a single mom that was raisin two kids on a very, I think it was $5.60 an hour so I know those struggles all to well. But you
have to understand the way business work in this State. I am a true mom and pop business. I have about 30 employees and my employees are the backbone of my business and I don’t just say that because we are debating this Bill because it is the truth, any employer that is succeeding in a business the majority of the time has to do with the employees that he is with. And I am proud to say that I have employees that have been with me 15 years, 14 years, 12 years and so on and I have new employees that I’ve just took on. The struggles to run a business today are real. The fixed costs that we’re talking about, the electric costs in the State of Connecticut one of the highest in the Union. Labor is a cost, it is a cost that you can control, it is probably one of the few costs that you can control as a business. I own a restaurant so food costs, that is something I can’t control. It is up and down, sometime you’re buying stuff at a cheaper price the follwin week it’s doubled in price but you still need that product for your menu so you have to purchase it. So you’re all over the lot. You know,
the State of Connecticut, we don’t make it easy for businesses either. We are not a business friendly state which makes it even harder for us to do business in this State. You know, I wish I could give my employees $30, 40, 50 dollars an hour because everyone of ‘em is worth it. There is no question in my mind but the reality is that I can only pay so much that customers are only willing to pay so much for the product that I’m producing. So I have limited funds. You know, when we went up to $10.10 an hour I had to reduce hours. I used to have a host and a bus person seven days a week, now I only have ‘em two days a week. That was cause of the $10.10 an hour. We went from $8.25 up to $10.10 an hour. When this $15 dollars an hour hits it’s gonna cost jobs. You know, the goal and, you know, the Chairwoman of the Labor Committee said that the goal is to help thousands of people in the State of Connecticut, to do better, to have a better life. That is the goal that we all want. We all share that goal and we would love to have that happen but $15 dollars an hour in such a short window of time
is very hard for businesses to absorb. The only thing we are gonna do is we’re gonna create a situation where there is gonna be more unemployment and there is gonna be less hours given to employees because the employer can’t bleed a stone. When you only have so much revenue how are you going to make up the difference in these wages. You know, I know people in the business community are gonna do away with certain parts of their business because they are not going to be able to afford it, so they are going to let people go. They are gonna stay open less hours because a Monday or a Tuesday is not profitable for them. They are thinking outside the box to see what they can do to keep their business goin. And we should all want businesses to survive and thrive because if they do, the employees benefit from that. We’re all not these big chain stores that are makin billions of dollars in profit we’re your local mom and pop, your little pizza shop, your little grocery store, your little bodega, your package store. These are the people in your community that live in your community that I am sure
are telling you, listen I can’t absorb any more, I can’t do this anymore. I know that in my business it is going to be very, very difficult even though it is mostly the front of the house, the bus people and hosts that this would affect in the back of the house. I don’t have any more revenue right now to give. I mean we’re hangin on. We are hangin on as best we can. I am not lining my pockets with thousands of dollars a week, that is not the reality of this world. I made more money in the 80s than I am right now in 2019, things were so different then. Regulations were, you know, not as they are now. The cost of insurance was a third of what we are paying today and so on and so forth. Electric costs was done. People had more money in their pocket, they were going out spending more money, more expendable income. You know, I operate in a business that it is a luxury to people to go out and spend some money at a restaurant. It is not a necessity so we deal with that. So we struggle with all the ups and downs of the marketplace and people working. Connecticut is not doing that well right now. We’re
This State is struggling and people in the State are struggling. Fifteen dollars an hour is a wage that everyone deserves there is no doubt about it, $19 dollars an hour is a wage that everyone deserves, no doubt about it and I wish to God that I could do that for all my employees and I think every employer here and every employer out there feels the same way. But guys, the reality of this situation is not such. We are not in businesses, not all of us are in businesses that are that lucrative that you can pay that kind of money out. It is just not the reality of life. I wish it was. But I can’t charge you $25.00 for a hamburger. I can’t charge you $50.00 dollars for a dish of veal, I’d be lockin my doors in a week, I’ll be done. And you wouldn’t be willing to pay those prices but what we’re doing here today is we’re gonna force employers to lay-off workers, to give them less hours, to go up on their prices cause everything across the board is gonna go up. You go to the grocery store it’s gonna cost you more. You go out to eat it’s gonna cost you more. You go to
the hardware store, that remodel job at your house everything is gonna cost you more. There is no doubt in my mind because we are settin the bar high here. And if you look at what’s goin on, I went to the Home Depot last week, first time I was in a Home Depot in six months. There was one person taking care of eight registers. They weren’t registers, you grab the gun now, you don’t even take the stuff out of your carriage, you just, you know, check everything out and you insert your card or your cash and you move on. The last time I was there, there was at least eight people taking care of people, scanning the products that you were buying. These corporations, the Walmart’s of the world, the CVS, the Home Depot’s what do you think they are doing? They are preparing themselves for this, this $15 dollars didn’t come out of the air. This has been part of presidential campaign, what four years ago, so now it has become a reality in a lot of states. So what are businesses doing. They are preparing. I went to McDonald’s, the first time. I had a little grandson; my daughter got a little upset with
me cause I went to McDonald’s and she didn’t want him to have McDonald’s but I went. And I haven’t been there in years. When I walked in, the last time I was in a McDonald’s there had to be like eight registers, eight people standing behind the registers, you’d walk up, they take your order, you pay ‘em, they give you your product and you move on. Well I walked into this McDonald’s and I saw two people behind the counter and there was this pole looking thing, like what the heck to do and the lady goes you know how to order. I was like, not really, I haven’t been here in a long time. She says well it is a kiosk, you have to look for your product, you hit the button, this that and the other thing. And I’m like oh my, God [Laughter] this is too hard for me to do. She showed me what to do. So now the next time I go to McDonalds I’ll know what to do. The last time I was there, there was eight people behind the counter. There was two, two. One that you placed your order, she took your money and the gentleman gave me my order when he yelled out my number. What do you think they are doin? Chili’s.
You go to Chili’s for lunchtime. There is an I-pad on the table, there is no waitstaff. You put your order in and somebody runs the food over to ‘ya. They are all preparing for this. But us mom and pops we can’t. We don’t have that luxury. I don’t have the money for that type of technology. I was just talkin to the owner of Nardelli’s, it’s a small Connecticut chain that makes sandwiches. He said, “Tony, listen if this thing goes through, in two years we’re gonna be automated, we’re gonna have kiosks.” All my franchisees are gonna have to cut because there is no way that they can absorb the cost for their employees through a sandwich. They sell grinders, they sell soda, they sell chips. How are they gonna make up this difference if they are paying someone $12 bucks an hour and they are gonna up to $15. Where are they gonna get this money? Are you gonna be willing to pay $18 dollars for a ham and cheese sandwich? I don’t think so. This is what we’re doing guys. It is a great goal and I agree with it and I want it more than anything and I am sincere when I say that. Thirty-six years in
business, every single one of my employees was like family to me and they are like family to me today. Even the people that are not employed by me, we’re still in touch. Christmas time we say, hello, they stop up, we’ll have a drink. I mean it’s because we respect one another. It’s like, you know, when you’re a small business owner they are your employees but they are also your family because you work side-by-side more hours that you do spend with your own family. I spend more hours with my employees than I do my wife or my kids when they were with us growing up. So I get it guys. I get it. But I think it is important that you really realize that it is not something that, it’s gonna happen, I get that. I, you know, I’m not a fool. I’ve been up here a long, long time. It’s gonna pass, everybody’s gonna think it’s hunky-dory, it’s not gonna be as bad as they said. Well you know the $10.10 we said the same thing, less and less jobs, there was less jobs, there were more jobs before than there are now and there is gonna be even less jobs, even in the retail sector. I mean, most of
our jobs are in Connecticut. There is gonna be less jobs because they are gonna be replaced by kiosks and computers. You go to Stop-N-Shop they got a robot going up and down the aisles cleaning the frickin floor. I said, what the hell is that? [Laughter] You know, I mean you know my wife sent me out for milk and I was like, holy - what the heck is that [Laughter] and then I had to scan my own groceries. I haven’t gone to the grocery store in a while and I’m like oh my God, I gotta scan my own groceries now cause they only have one cashier open at nine o’clock at night and I’m like oh my God, this is crazy, you know, and I had one item it kept goin and it wouldn’t scan. I’m like throw this thing aside, so I’m learnin. I’m learning how to live in this real world and I just hope that you guys realize that we’re not against people, we are not against people having a wage. Everyone of my colleagues on this side of the aisle want nothing more than to have people live a life that is abundant and full and that they can obtain things in life. That is what we all want. That is why we are
legislators to make people’s lives better. But the unfortunate reality is that there is going to be consequences to this. There is gonna be severe consequences and you might not believe that but it is the truth. There is gonna be job loss, there is gonna be hours cut because you can’t get blood out of a stone. When the money is not there it’s just not there. And you’re gonna see places folding up and unfortunately they’re gonna be places in the neighborhood, the grocery store and that little pizzeria and all those little stores that we have in our neighborhoods. Those are the ones that are going to be affected. It is not goin to be the Walmart’s and the TJ Max’s and the McDonald’s and all those stores, they’re gonna survive, they’re doing it. They are spending millions of dollars on all this automation stuff to make it less costly for them to do business. But unfortunately we don’t have that luxury. You think I’m gonna hire a 16-year-old kid and pay him $15 dollars an hour to clean tables or to sit someone down? I can’t do it. I’ll be cleaning the tables and I’ll have the
waitstaff just clean their own tables. I mean these are the choice we’re gonna have to make. The reality of life and that is in my business. But the liquor store guy that has the college kid coming in two, three times a week to stock the shelves, he’s not gonna be able to do it anymore. They are tellin me, I can’t afford that. I can’t rise my prices; I don’t have that kind of volume of customers. You know, we’re not all on a highway where we have an abundance of customers just coming in through the doors at all times, you know, cash resisters ringing all the time. That’s not the reality. We are struggling. We’re struggling in the State of Connecticut in so many different ways and when people are not makin the money that they should be makin, it’s a negative affect for all of us. We are gonna put more money in people’s pockets and that is a great thing but there is a cost. And I just want everybody here to realize that the consequences of doing this, the very people that we seek to help are the people that we’re gonna hurt. And I thank you for your time, Madam Speaker.
ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative DiMassa.

REP. DIMASSA (116TH):

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It’s good to see you up there this early in the morning. I rise in strong support of this Bill and I would just like to highlight a few facts. Certainly we’ve heard a very passionate debate on both sides of the aisle and there are strong feelings. We’ve heard a lot about the idea that there will be unemployment. That we are going to drive people out of work with raising the minimum wage. Now we’ve heard that tonight however what we haven’t heard are the statistics, so in 2014 this legislature, well not this legislature but “the” legislature raised the minimum wage. At the time in January the unemployment rate in Connecticut was 7.2 percent. In January of 2015 that rate was at 6.1 percent, in January of 16 that rate was at 5.5 percent, in January of 17 that rate was at 4.8 percent and these
are not my statistics these are statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. So the facts would indicate that raising the minimum wage at least in 2014 did not hurt the economy, it helped the economy. It brought people back to work. It energized people to go out to get off assistance to help themselves, to help their families and let’s talk about the fact that what we see mentioned here is that this $15 dollars an hour is not going to go into a savings account, let’s be honest. This is gonna go back into the economy. These are people that are gonna go out and maybe for the first time in years be able to buy a cheeseburger at a mom and pop. We are going to bring in business. These are people that cannot afford these things at this point. You know, I had a teacher a schoolteacher tell me a story about a child who would come into school and every few weeks the child would be embarrassed, they wouldn’t raise their hand, they would try to sit in the back of the class and students would kind of squirm when they sat around this child. And it turned out that there was a
single parent household and the individual made minimum wage and every few weeks they didn’t have a washer and dryer in the home, in the apartment and every few weeks the child would come to school with soiled clothing because they could not afford the laundromat. Think about that for a minute. Think about what raising the minimum wage is going to do for the people at the bottom of the ladder trying to climb up. We’re not talking about vacations here. We’re not talking about new I-phones for kids, we’re talking about basic human goods and services that every single family in this State in this day and age deserves. We owe it to them. It is our duty to see it happen and certainly when we talk about indexing it is taking the politics out of the equation, put it to the market. Let the market dictate it. Isn’t that what we’re talking about. Isn’t that what everybody on both sides of the aisle is talking about that we don’t want it to be a political argument. We want it to be driven by the market, by the economy. You know, CBS ran a story April 30th on Money Line and there is a term out
there, death of despair. There is a link, there is
a scientific link to an increased rate in suicides
based on minimum wage because people in this day and
age don’t feel there is any way to get out of their
economic circumstance that they are permanently
trapped at the bottom. That is something that I am
sorry that I stand here and I simply cannot accept
that. We need to do better. Now does this Bill
solve all of Connecticut’s issues? Absolutely not.
Does the Bill do enough to raise the wage that
people need to live on, we can always do better.
And it is encouraging to hear colleagues on both
sides of the aisle talk about the ability to do
better but the fact of the matter is this, when you
look at Amazon, when you look at Costco, when you
look at Bank of America by 2021 they want to be at
$20 dollars an hour minimum wage they are not just
doing it because they are big businesses and they
can afford it, they look at their bottom lines. They
are doing it because it is good business because
that is how they know when their employees show up,
their employees are focused on their job because
they are fed, they are taking care of their families, they see the light at the end of the tunnel, it is good business for all the stakeholders and that is what we need to be doing in the State of Connecticut. Will it be easy, no. Will there be challenges for small businesses? There will be and I am committed personally to working with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle when those issues come up, we’re ready. We’ll address them, we’ll work together but let’s bring everybody up. We need to raise those in our society in the State of Connecticut that have been begging to have a decent shot at the American dream and if we can’t guarantee that no matter where you come from, no matter what background you’re born into, no matter what city, no matter what town, if we can’t guarantee that for every single resident in this State, then I don’t know what we’re doing here. Thank you, Madam Speaker very much.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the
Bill as Amended? Representative Rutigliano, from the 123rd.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As everybody knows I am in the restaurant business. I though Tony articulated lots of frustrations of being a small businessperson and then owing a family business very well. So I might talk on a couple of other things. The last speaker, I fundamentally disagree with a couple of things. I don’t think the unemployment rate’s a good indicator on whether or not the economy is doing well because we have a low participation rate in employment. Our participation rate in jobs is around 60 percent which equates to Honduras to be perfectly frank and also the good Representative before that spoke of the minimum wage being sort of a social safety net. I don’t look at the minimum wage as a social safety net. We have things to help people that are in poverty. We even have an earned tax credit that we passed here. We have on nationally and we have one here in Connecticut that is a good way to help folks who are
on the bottom end of the thing, on the economic ladder. I look at the minimum wage as sort of an opportunity wage and I say that because I am a product of the minimum wage, right. I grew up in a pretty lower middleclass family in Waterbury and it was, I got an opportunity to get a job, a pretty low paying job, I scrubbed pots and pans at the Waterbury Hospital and then I got a job in Woodbury at a place called Phillips Country Kitchen and Pies where I scrubbed dishes and the cook kind a liked me a little bit and they sort of showed me what to do, and I was pretty good at it and so I moved into the cooking end of things and that translated to me going to culinary school. And the government helped me go to culinary school. I took out student loans, I got a Pell Grant but I studied hard and did pretty well and I started a career but that career for me started because somebody took a shot on a young kid that had no skills, no job experience, but he could afford to do it because the wages were low enough for them to teach me how to do the job and I’m appreciative of that and I’ve taken that degree and
taken that beginning I got in Waterbury and Woodbury
and I’ve sort of turned it into my own business were
I provide for my family. I have hundreds of
employees. I pay lots of taxes. We really
stimulated the Connecticut economy. I’ve given back
by hiring and succeeding and making sure that I take
a lot of the employees with me and I now provide
that opportunity that was provided to me to other
people. We have lots of teenagers that come in and
work for us for a short period of time and sometimes
they stay and sometimes they don’t but they walk
away with better skills and they are better for it.
They meet people, they network, they make a little
money, they help put themselves through college,
they do all sorts of things they use my business
for and I’m proud of that and I want them to have
that opportunity.

We were talking before about the rate of the
pace of the minimum wage going up here in
Connecticut and we are not going up the same as our
neighbors by the way. We are not going up the same
as Massachusetts and New York were are going up much
faster. Massachusetts does not have an index. New York really doesn’t have an index either. New York is going up in two years to $13.00 and then they are tying their minimum wage to the consumer price index and that consumer price index is gonna stop when the minimum wage gets to $15. So they are not even going beyond that. Our minimum wage is going to be one of the most generous and go up at the fastest pace in the country which I don’t know if that is good for low wage workers. I don’t know how much opportunity is going to be out there for young people with low skills or not a college education. I think they are the ones that are gonna get hurt the most because the minimum wage isn’t, in my opinion, a social safety net. It is an opportunity, all it does is give somebody a chance to learn something, do something. Like my mom always used to tell me, you never got anything by stayin in the house. Get out of the house, get to work, you never know who you are gonna bump into. And you know what? That is true for a lot of people, that was true for me. I bumped into my business partner
while I was at work and from there we became friends and we became business partners and we’ve been successful for 20 something years and I’m pretty proud of that. So, I’ll leave the restaurant part of it aside and try to talk to you a little bit about Trumbull, the town I live in and the town I represent.

One of the other concerns we have as we raise the minimum wage is retail, brick and mortar stores. We all know they are not doing very well. Our largest taxpayer in the town of Trumbull is our mall, it has been there for a longtime, pays a ton of money in taxes, it’s got lots of empty storefronts. I don’t know how raising their costs helps them or helps our property taxpayers or 80 percent of the kids that work in our Trumbull Mall are from Bridgeport, the city closest to it. I don’t know how the Meriden Mall is doing. I’m not sure the Brass City Mall is full of stores but I am not too sure why we would want to help online merchants who are already doing pretty well and hamper our brick and mortar taxpaying, property tax paying
units here in Connecticut by artificially raising their costs of doing business. So I think it is something that we should consider, everybody has a Main Street. A lot of towns have malls and retail and we want these people to succeed cause they are the ones that are keeping our property taxes down by paying into the system.

So with that, Madam Speaker I have an Amendment. Madam Speaker, the Clerk has an Amendment LCO No. 8281 respectfully ask that the Clerk call the Amendment and I be allowed to summarize.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

The House will stand-at-ease.

The House will come back to order. Will the Clerk please call LCO 8281 which will be designate House Amendment Schedule “F”.

CLERK:

LCO No 8281, designated House Amendment Schedule “F” and offered by Representatives Klarides, Candelora, O’Dea and Polletta.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):
The representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative you may proceed with summarization.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker basically this Amendment slows the pace. It starts in 2020 and implements the minimum wage over the next four years, still achieves the goal that the proponents are looking for but gives businesses as Connecticut economy is recovering it’s slows the pace where the labor costs are increased. It also settles on the date when the increases happen in the Bill as written, it is a little confusing, I know it is October one month, September, June, August. This would have a date where every year it goes up consistently. I move adoption. When the vote is taken, I ask that it be taken by role.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

The Question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule “F”. Will you remark on the Amendment? The Question before the Chamber is
on a rollcall vote, all those in favor of a rollcall vote please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Your request for 20 percent has been met. When the vote is taken it will be taken by rollcall. Will you remark on the Amendment? Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Been listenin myself, glad to have an opportunity to sit down and take some of this in and there is a concern about small business. I do recognize the struggle, stories that have been told but I would like to make sure that we’re give a balance vision to not just the people in the Chamber but those who are remarkably still up and watchin this. Right here in the beautiful Capital, the City of Hartford, we have Bear’s Restaurant and that restaurant decided that they were gonna be able to and we use them here at the Capital and knowing this information makes me
really proud that we actually use them to provide service for us when we need to be fed, but the owners of this small business have been payin $15 dollars an hour to their employees since January 1 of 2007 and contrary to the beliefs that that would shut down a small business it’s actually grown their business. They’ve actually gone from owing one restaurant to owning three. They recently opened a new pizzeria up in New Haven so when we say that payin people a $15 dollar minimum wage is only for the big corporations like Walmart and Amazon and all the other companies that are jumpin on board because obviously we had somethin that can be done, they’re doin it. They’re steppin up and they are doing it in ways that they understand that this is not just beneficial for themselves it is beneficial for the employees and it is also beneficial for the people that they serve, their customers and what was amazin to me when I looked into this was the owner, Jamie the Bear and Cheryl McDonnell operate Bear’s, actually have somethin interestin to say and it was our goal to share our success with our employees,
not only to share but also to attract the best employees who can deliver a memorial experience to our customers, that’s what Jamie the Bear said. And then Cheryl McDonnel said the couple believes employees will be encouraged to elevate their level of service knowing the new wage will attract a wider array of experienced candidates. So it makes not only the business competitive in what they’re doin, it also makes the employees that they look to hire competitive because they understand that this company is thinkin outside of the box and doin somethin and proving that what they’re doin is actually effective and that it doesn’t hurt their business. It has actually grown their business. And for what I’ve understood in this Chamber, we’ve actually had someone here before they arrived here as a legislator who owned a business and said when we raised the minimum wage back in 2014 that would close doors and actually turned around and opened another business since then. So I want to make sure that the people that are listenin and payin attention to what we’re doin today, yesterday, last
night on behalf of the 3323,000 workers in the State of Connecticut that we’re tryin to lift out of poverty and put on a trajectory of prosperity is not the wrong thing to do. It is the right thing to do and not only is it the right thing to do it is a long overdue thing to do. So with that bein said, I would implore my colleagues on this side of the aisle to vote no on this Amendment because I do not support it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you, madam. The Chair asks that if you would like to speak on the Amendment that you raise your hands. Representative Rutigliano.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I am so excited that the good Representative, the Chair of the Labor Committee is sincere and secure and happy that the free market system is working and that a business made a decision on its own without a government mandate to raise the wages of it’s workers so is Costco, so is Walmart, so is Home Depot so we have a robust free market capitalisms system. We don’t
need government interference, in fact with government interference we’re gonna raise the wage of everyone of Bear’s competitors and take away his advantage. So there in itself shows you that the market works. The businesses will adapt and people will thrive and survive. Thank you, Madam Chair.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just to clarify what this Amendment does and I appreciate the Chair’s comments but to be honest they don’t address what the Amendment does. What the gentleman from Trumbull is trying to do is give small businesses just a little bit more time to make this work. We are talking about one more year, one more year. That’s all he’s askin for. He is not saying don’t do $15 dollars at some point. The gentleman is not saying that at all. All he says is give the small business guy one more year to figure out how to make
it work. That’s it. He is not derailing the whole Bill. He is not saying get rid of this concept entirely. He is saying give us one more year to make it happen, that’s all this Amendment does and streamline the dates to make it just a little bit easier for folks to figure out. And I think that is a pretty reasonable request. It is a pretty reasonable request. And further just to address the Chair’s comments about the restaurant to which she referred in Hartford, that was a business decision that that one restaurant made and to then take, and a decision by the way that worked for them, and that’s great. But to then take that argument and say well everybody should do it and work for them to, after we heard businesses says for months, in fact years that we can’t do this. We are asking business owners what they think and they are telling us what they think because they are living it on the ground every single day. We are basically saying, okay we heard you we just don’t care, cause we’re smart and you’re stupid and that logic is what is killing the economy here in the State of
Connecticut. The gentleman is asking for a year to make this work. That’s it. And the fact that we won’t even entertain that is really, truly unfortunate. I would really urge members in the Chamber to support that gentleman’s Amendment.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative de la Cruz.

REP. DE LA CRUZ (41ST):

Thank you, Madam Chair. Button has been pushed for about six hours; this has been a good debate but the voice is goin. I would say on the Amendment and I understand moving it out one year, I talked to a lot of the folks that are in my district, I serve New London and Groton and so there are a ton of restaurants in both of my districts and if we looked at this in just the vacuum of tonight and said that, you know, it makes sense, four years, but if we look at what we’ve done 2014 is the actual last day of the last raise that we’ve given the minimum wage workers so that goes back to 14 so when they do
receive this raise this time around it will be six years from the last raise to this one so I think that is what we’re trying to get to was getting that compressed, gettin it over, I think it is four years in the Bill that we have now or three-and-a-half, four-and-a-half, I don’t want to make any closer, and then I want to make a few comments to.

You know, if anyone seen that movie The Matrix where nothin is real. I kind of feel that way about our economy in a lot of different ways. When you walk into a restaurant and there’s folks working there, they are ultimately at the end of the day like you mentioned a lot of folks qualify for earned income tax credits at the end of the day. So at the end of the day they are really not making the $10.10, we all know that. We realize this everyday when we walk in any restaurant or Walmart, or McDonald’s. These restaurants or even big box stores they aren’t paying enough and ultimately at the end of the year when they get the earned income tax credit like Walmart got $158 million dollars in social service money for employees that work there
40 hours a week. So we can continue to live in a fake world but at some point the car hits the wall, at some point we have to admit that there are a huge group of people in our country that don’t make enough money to survive and that is not a small group, that is a huge group. And I see more of us, especially even myself as a union sheet metal worker watching my insurance rates go absolutely ballistic, skyrocketing, seeing maybe I’ll have less money, less buying power as a union sheet metal worker up here in Connecticut it is disturbing to me. So I think, you know, that’s one of the things that we really have to keep in mind, you know, six years goin back and then we talked about even the YMCA and all the great programs they have. I am thinkin about the people that are actually workin at the YMCA, they’re our kids, they are watching our kids when we drop them off cause we can afford it. So when they’re watching our kids, their kid is at home alone. That is the kind, we need to lift everyone’s boat out and I know it sounds almost impossible but I actually think we can get there. I was glad to
hear some of the comments from this side of the aisle because we keep talking about unintended consequences of this Bill and all the bad things that can come out of it. I think we should look at the intended consequences of the Bill, what we hope to have happen, what we hope when the minimum wage is raised. I run a sheet metal business in Groton, Connecticut and when I hear that the kiosk has been built specifically to get rid of minimum wage people if we think that the reason they are doin that is just to get rid of the minimum wage people, we haven’t done anything yet. It’s been six years since we raised it. Those things are gonna happen anyway. I get to see technology at my job that would make you guys, you couldn’t even imagine the stuff that we can do at our work. I can cut stainless steel seven inches thick; I can write your name in it. Something that would have took a man or woman and labor hours 40 hours this machines now is doing in an hour. Machines are doing a lot of the work that we used to do. Our economy is gonna change in profound ways. We’re gonna lose a lot of jobs to
the driverless car and oh, by the way the electric car that is comin I think a few people know what my thoughts are on the electric car so all those things are coming. Our economy is changing. I think we’re gonna be a service industry. There is a lot of things that we have to look out for. So I hope when we’re in here voting, I hope when we’re in talking about the future that we’re thinking about our kids, our grandkids cause to be honest with ya, I look at my grandson and I actually don’t know what he’s gonna do. A lot of times in my family you end up being a sheet metal worker or an HVA worker, HVAC and those jobs even though were shooing everybody into the trades those hours get eaten up by a lot of the technology that is coming out today. So again, I don’t buy the fact that because people are brining out their own groceries cause that’s gonna happen anyway. The robot that cleans up the aisles it’s all comin. It’s all gonna happen. We got robots that vacuum the floors for us. We’ve got all those things that we mentioned comin but the one thing that is never gonna change is that low wage worker
that is takin care of our moms and dad and eventually ourselves that are part of the economy that when they are takin care of us, long-term care they are not able to take care of their family in the right way and I can tell you if we go down the path that I think we’re goin down, I imagine that my mother was able to work one job. My brother, my sister we were at home, we survived and it worked out but my mother came home every night. The family dynamic now is those families they don’t see mom and dad overnight sometimes and that is what’s wrong. I can’t imagine that Joe de la Cruz, you guys would be dealin with if my mother didn’t whoop my butt a few times cause she wasn’t around, that is quality family time that she was able to spend with me at the end of the day. We are losing that and this is just the beginning of the Bill and you ask were do we start or where do we begin, we begin tonight. We begin now. I say tonight but it’s today but we begin by passing a Bill today that moves Connecticut forward and all of its people. So I proudly support this Bill and I can’t wait to put Connecticut on the
path that I believe we need to go on. So thank you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? Representative Klarides.

REP. KLARIDES (114TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker I’ve been listening to a lot of my colleagues, people that I agree with, people I don’t agree with. And in regards to this Amendment I think that we set it pretty clearly at this point. We have been talking about predictability and sustainability and businesses and citizens of this State knowing what is coming next and one of the biggest problems we’ve heard from businesses and individual citizens is that they don’t know what’s coming next, because we in this legislature and in this building are constantly changing are constantly taking more from them, our constantly putting more burdens on them, are constantly turning their lives around. What this Amendment does is at least gives our business a
little more predictability and the ability to plan for the costs that they will incur. I don’t know how that can be a bad thing. I’m glad that my colleague just talked about facing reality and knowing what’s coming. What’s coming is not business. What’s coming is not jobs. And what’s coming are not people making more money. We can either live in a world of what we want to be or we can live in world of reality and the reality here is there are many businesses in this State that pay $15 dollars an hour. Most of our service and most of our restaurants with tips make way over that. And that is a lovely story that we just heard about that restaurant and there are many businesses that have been successful but there are many more that haven’t and the reason they haven’t is because this State does everything to put them out of business. Everything to put them out of business. And so what is going to happen when we force this upon businesses is everybody that is working now is not going to make more money. There’ll be some people that do but there will be less people working, less
people working. How is that helping people? I don’t understand it. It doesn’t make any sense to me. We need to take care of the people of this State. We need to take care of the workers in this State but forcing one mandate after another and this is not the beginning of the problem, Madam Speaker this is the continuation of what we’ve been doing in this State to businesses and workers. And when we continue to do that, there is a reason Connecticut is almost last in coming back from the recession. There is a reason that we have trouble keeping businesses here and there is a reason people get out of this State as quickly as they can. We all hear it every day. As soon as my kid graduates from school, as soon as my husband or wife retires, I can’t wait to leave. That is very sad to me, Madam Speaker because I have lived here my entire life. But if you really want to take care of workers in this State, you’re not gonna force businesses to cut their jobs and this Amendment at the very least takes a little bit of that pressure off business and allows them to plan for what’s coming and what’s
coming is not good. I urge adoption of this Amendment, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you, madam. Will you remark further?

Will you remark further on this Amendment? If not would Staff. I’m sorry, I apologize.

Representative Yaccarino, I apologize, sir.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I should apologize for going after our great Minority Leader but I am going to clarify something. The $10.10 did not go into effect five years ago, it went into effect less than a year-and-a-half ago. So if we’re gonna debate something on the floor we should be honest about it or at least clarify it. Maybe it was an honest mistake and it is not just the businesses that are gonna help benefit giving predictability for the next five years it’s our nonprofits. I think we forgot about so dearly this evening. So I do support this Amendment mainly for our nonprofits. Businesses tend to adapt either they lay people off or they go out of business or they just cut hours. But the nonprofits we can’t
let them go out of business and I think it is vitally important for them. But the fact is that the $10.10 was 2014, it went into effect less than a year-and-a-half ago so to be clear on that. So that’s all I have to say, thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? If not will the Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Will the Members please take your seats, the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.
The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "F"

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ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

The Amendment fails [Gavel]. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended?

Representative Rutigliano.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I just want to conclude and let the Chamber now on a personal note that I don’t begrudge anybody making any amount of money they want to make. I hope that everybody makes as much as they can, but it is awful hard to find a career, it is awful hard to find that second, third and forth wrung of your employment ladder if there is not a first one. So I think most
of these minimum wage jobs should be and if not they should be an opportunity for somebody to enter the workforce, get some experience and start their own journey on that ladder of employment and to careerhood so that can be self-sustaining so with that Madam Speaker I will conclude my remarks. Thank you, very much.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Kokoruda, you have the floor madam.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Good morning, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Good morning, madam.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Madam Speaker, it seems like old times, I expect Speaker Sharkey to walk in any minute [Laughter]. Madam Speaker, obviously I want to speak on the underlying Bill but I just wanted, as I’ve listened to the conversation and I’ve heard
things like we want to be able to help our workers and these people are not asking for luxuries but I can’t help but think about in the years I’ve been here is where, how little we’ve moved with education and I know, Madam Speaker you understand more than most people in this Chamber. We spend as a State more than most states spend on education, rightly so but in my nine years we have not moved that needle as much as we need to. Until we have the courage to make structural changes, you want to give someone a raise. I think give someone a decent education. And money is not the only answer and until we stand up to the powers that be, that will not let us put our children first, until we stand up and have the courage to say, it’s not working we’re changing course we’re gonna be having this conversation of our future, people sitting in our chairs having this conversation. It is so discouraging where we were nine years ago with an education reform Bill that so many of use had high hopes with. And I know there has been some improvement, Madam Speaker and I know you have been part of that but we are so far, when
you compare, we are one of the top States with states with spending but we have one of the smallest populations so we talk about minimum wage. We should be embarrassed with what we put into education that minimum wage is the most we’re pushing for. Our children deserve to get a decent education and not worry about minimum wage. They should have a better than a living wage. They should be able to be part of our State, they should be able to thrive here, have a family here, have a decent job here, help grow our State, be part of this but until we’re brave and we really are willing to say, our course isn’t working, if you are not gonna be part of the solution step aside because those of us that want to see our kids thrive know it is more that minimum wage. So I just couldn’t help but think of that, Madam Speaker. I know so much has been said and worked on with education but I think nine years later when we talk about poverty the greatest thing I’ve always felt you can do about the next generation with poverty is educated them. Give them hope. But I’ll tell ya, for all we put
into it, I know we can always do more. I am not satisfied; I hope you’re not either.

But anyway, Madam Speaker as far as the underlying Bill. I think a couple of days ago, I sat in an Appropriations meeting and I am not on the Labor Committee and so I watched some of the Public Hearing on this Bill and I wasn’t at the meeting, I know it went for hours and hours and a Senator brought up the fact that after about ten hours of Public Hearings not one word had changed in the Bill. I always felt personally and I tell people this when somebody calls me to fill out a form for an endorsement I always say to them, how about goin to the Public Hearing that when it’s gonna get my endorsement. I want to hear both sides. I think the Public Hearing is the most important part of this process, I always have. So I’m not gonna fill a form out saying I’m voting on something until I hear both sides. So to think that we had ten hours, but I think it was in that ballpark, ten hours of testimony from Connecticut citizens, businesses, not for profits, farmers, and I can go on and on and
there was nothing they said of value that was important enough to put in the Bill. It’s pretty astounding when you think about it. Something that is, has such an impact on our State. So hundreds and hundreds of people took the time to all come up, hundreds and hundreds of people sent in testimony but nothing they said was valuable enough to consider for our Bill. That is pretty incredible. So Madam Speaker, one of the things I had asked in Appropriations was I am very concerned about the IDD community and I’m talking about the most challenged part of our IDD community with work. About five or six years ago the Labor Committee put a bill out and it was just this, “no one would be able to work without at least minimum wage”, everyone and I remember going to that meeting and testifying and would that I have the Executive director of an organization on the shoreline called Vista and the executive director Helen Bosch and she brought one of her clients with her, a young man from the Shoreline, very disabled, and they testified and I remember one of the state reps who was a member of
that Committee making a comment, what he said was, "If we don’t give them minimum wage it would be better if they didn’t work." And you know he meant it sincerely, he wanted them treated fairly but he totally missed the point and my constituent said these folks, she said the people were serve in Vista the majority of them get minimum wage if not better but there is a segment of the IDD community that needs special consideration. We spend so much time on autism day up here in Hartford that Representative Abercrombie puts together every year, we give an award out to a business that steps up and helps and hires people under the autism spectrum and we are always looking for new companies to buy into this and I would say the majority of them do give minimum wage but there is a group that will never be able to do a full day or a fair day’s work for a fair salary and what I was told in Appropriations was that is taken care of in the State statute we don’t have to worry about that. That is not in the State stature, that needs to be addressed here and even though we talked about it in Approps nothing
was done. These organizations are able to get a certificate of subminimum wage and the young man that testified in that Labor Public Hearing several years ago he filled the bags, when you go in the hospital you know they give you the bags with the toothpaste and mouthwash and all, that was his job. He went one-and-a-half days a week and he filled those bags. Someone getting minimum wage could potentially fill, I don’t know 100 bags, 200 bags. He wasn’t able to do that but he did his best and he was able to provide and fill bags of a fraction but he did it. What we forget sometimes with these people is that hour-and-a-half, that day-and-a-half of work is his life. I met so many people after that testimony, fathers who came up to me and said my daughter going to that office and putting stamps on or running a machine that one day a week is what she talks about. It gets them out of the house, it gets them to meet people, it gets them to interact. The quite often have a coach that has to be paid for but these businesses step-up and make it happen. And the fact that our Bill, this Bill presented
totally ignores that folks. If we want to count on the Federal Government to take care of them, that’s fine but why are they being singled out, why are we talking about workers that we want to help thrive and we are not addressing the most disadvantaged of our DB community. So I ask you, why cannot we do something. Why wasn’t it considered to protect them, this group of people in this Bill and.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

That goes to the proponent of the Bill. thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

That is through me, madam.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Yes.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Representative Porter prepare yourself to answer a question please.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I am concerned that the IDD community, that
segment of them that really cannot work, do a full day’s work is not addressed in here at all. These are folks that most businesses would be incapable of paying minimum wage to and I am just curious why, especially since it was discussed in Appropriations that is not addressed in this Bill and they are not protected.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Actually there is a federal waiver that if employers have, if they request and they have people with disabilities they actually are allowed to pay them a subminimum wage based on their capabilities, so I’ll use myself as an example. If I was disabled in any capacity and went and applied for a job and was hired and that employer had a Federal waiver and I was only capable of performing 85 percent of the job, then he would be allowed to pay me 85 percent of the minimum wage but only me. This is done on a
one-on-one basis so specifically a waiver that is
designed to address an employee that is hired by an
employer who has a federal waiver and it is gauged
on that employee’s capabilities.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I said, a few
minutes ago and I’m sorry that the Chairman of Labor
did not hear me, I am aware of that. But we also
have a federal minimum wage which we don’t feel is
adequate for Connecticut. We think it is important
enough to address it in our own Bill. My question
really is what are we doing for that IDD community
that we’re talking about. What have we done here in
Connecticut to make sure that they can stay employed
and that these organizations that really do job
coaching are able to continue finding them jobs and
they are provided for them on a lower rate? Some
people are singled out, exempted and they aren’t.
So why are they not in this Bill, I still don’t
understand it?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I am not understandin what the good gentlewoman is talkin about. So I would ask.

Through you.

If she could be more clear on exactly what it is she wishes to see in this Bill for IDD clients?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Kokoruda could you be a little more specific please, madam?

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. What I was saying was to address what the proponent of the Bill said. There is a federal law that you can apply for a certificate of subminimum wage. It is not businesses that only do it, it is also organizations. When I talked to Vista they don’t
have a waiver right now. They don’t have a certificate right now because none of their clients would need it so everyone is getting minimum wage. But when she came up to testify a few years ago she had several clients, IDD people community that needed those waivers. So when we talk about this being a federal issue, so is minimum wage but we still address it. And I just don’t understand why we address people under 18, we address trainees but we don’t address in this Bill that specific group. We are leaving it to the federal government but we are not leaving the rest of it to the federal government. So I am wondering why this group was left out and verified to be covered and taken care of in this Bill that’s proposed today?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you and thank you, Madam Speaker. I guess I need to redirect this again and just ask the good gentlewoman what is it that she would like to see in
the Bill that wasn’t in the Bill cause I’m still not clear on exactly what it is she wants to see in the Bill or what she feels was left out of the Bill. So if she could just state what it is that she feels was left out and should be in the Bill and how it should address them.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. What the question is why, if we’re going to work with this Bill to help workers, to help Connecticut workers why has this group not been included? That is my question. Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

They are.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):
Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

So IDD people, this community that we’re talking about that have waivers and don’t have waivers, people that cannot work a full day, a fair day’s work are covered in this Bill? Could I please just see what lines they are in, I just don’t see it, I’m missing it?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Madam Speaker, if I’m understandin here correctly she is saying if they are not able to work?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

You know when we.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

When we first talk about this community of
people it used to be based on many, many years ago in sort of a manufacturing model of how many pieces you could produce. So I never said these people couldn’t work. I’m saying, and I don’t know if the proponent heard what I said, my story about the gentleman filling bags. He goes to work, he fills bags but at a much smaller rate than someone with more ability so that is all I’m asking, is there is no protection for that group here. The State of Connecticut’s new minimum wage Bill has no protection from the group of IDD, the community of IDD people I’m addressing.

So, through you, Madam Speaker.

That’s all my question, it’s pretty simple. Why couldn’t we protect them in this Bill?

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Madam Speaker, there is a federal waiver. We have done nothin to change that in this Bill. The same protections that they would get through the federal waiver are still in effect. I don’t know
how else to answer that question.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

If they are able body workers they get minimum wage. If they are disabled there is a federal waiver that the employer can use to gage a wage for them according to their capability.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Madam Speaker, I’m sorry I don’t mean to be confusing. I never talked standing here about able bodied workers. I’m talking about a segment of our community that needs help and the federal government has stepped up and provided this waiver. The federal government has said a lot about labor laws but here in Connecticut and in this Bill we have addressed what issue we don’t agree with, with the federal government. What issues we think the federal government needs to be doing more with except for this community. There are people that cannot go and do a full day’s work every day and they don’t always
have a waiver. But we have to help businesses provide for them. We have to assist businesses and if we tell businesses take them at $15 or don’t take them and that is what we’re doing here because we are not addressing it. So we are leaving it up to the federal government and I have to ask why are we not comfortable leaving the whole minimum wage issue up to the federal government, but we’re comfortable allowing this most needy community of our residents, we’re comfortable leaving that up to the federal government, why haven’t we addressed and taken care of those people in this proposed Bill?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

That is my question.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I believe that I have answered this question to the best of my ability but I would defer to Representative Tercyak since he has introduced the Bill addressing what the [Laughs] good
Representative is talkin about this year.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Tercyak.

REP. TERCYAK (26TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Thank you very much. This is true I did reintroduce this Bill this year. I was the one who introduced it years ago when we had the discussion about it in the Labor Committee. The important thing about this situation that we are talking about here, where nobody has ever introduced any testimony that somebody applied for a federal waiver to be able to pay less than the minimum wage to the disabled and have that waiver denied. Dozens of Connecticut companies use this waiver, hundreds, possibly thousands of disabled are employed at less than minimum wage under this waiver. But here is what matters here, whether you look at this situation and call it protection or whether you look at this situation and call it oppression, this situation will not change. There is not a syllable
in this Bill that addresses that to make it better or worse or to say we should continue it. It is not addressed. It is not part of this legislation. If we would like to discuss in this legislation by our rules that would be called an Amendment. But it is not as the person who introduced this legislation again earlier this year, call the situation protection if you wish, call the situation oppression if you wish, it is not addressed in this Bill and nothing in this Bill will change that situation. I hope that helps clear up the confusion, Madam Speaker. Thank you for this opportunity and thank you for the proponent of the Bill to let me speak on the Bill I introduced earlier. I appreciate it. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know I really don’t think of this as oppression, I really think of it as opportunity for this community and you know what, as we put this Bill together obviously the
Bill that Representative has just talked about failed, it’s gone. Well bills are incorporated with each other all the time. It’s just my point, I’ll leave it here. This community was left out of this discussion, if there’s another discussion, great but it is pretty remarkable that we step up here today to help people to enforce the mandate these changes and leave a community that needs our help out. If there is another Bill coming tomorrow that’s great. I’m not aware of it and my point was I brought this up at Appropriations and was told it was part of State law and when I found out it wasn’t I was surprised. Anybody who would think minimum wage is for everybody doesn’t understand this community and all the reason I stood up here today was this is about life for these people, it doesn’t give them a place to go, just go, it gives them something to do. It gives them a life and if we don’t think that is important and someone said today, one of the representatives said we’re not talking about luxuries, no were not. But the people I’m talking about were talking about having a life and I just
thought it was important enough if this Bill is so important that it has been one of the major pushes of this legislature this year, that we are here 12 hours or whatever, I just thought it was important to address and it is disappointing that it is not in this Bill and this group, at least with this major legislation, has been just forgotten. So, thank you Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, madam. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Mushinsky of the 85th. You have the floor, madam.

REP. MUSHINSKY (85TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, good morning.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Good morning, madam and what a beautiful morning.

REP. MUSHINSKY (85TH):

I wouldn’t know Madam Speaker [Laughter]. But I do want to focus my remarks on the families for whom we are passing this Bill. The minimum wage
right now in Connecticut is $10.10 an hour or
$21,008 dollars per year if both parents are working
fulltime and bringing home minimum wage. These
parents are almost $8,000 dollars short of housing
affordability in my area of the State. According to
the United Way two parents living in the Wallingford
Marion area require $24 dollars an hour income in
the family just to afford housing. This does not
include food, it does not include healthcare, it
does not include clothing or transportation this is
just for housing. So working parents in my end of
the State need $12 dollars an hour as soon as we can
possibly pass it. When they make less than that
they must work multiple jobs and they don’t see
their kids very often. Kids come home to an empty
house, the family is stressed and pulled apart. The
kids don’t get the attention they need to grow up to
be successful residents of the State. In my
district survey I asked about the $15 dollar wage
and the district is split 50/50 on this question.
So I think it was helpful that the Labor Committee
decided to stretch out the increase to $15 dollars
through a four-and-a-half year time period but the parents, the 50 percent that need this, the parents that need this increase are tying to afford housing and to support their families and support their family life without working multiple jobs and exhausting themselves. So please think of them and support this Bill on their behalf. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, madam. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Simanski of the 62nd, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SIMANSKI (62ND):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. To quote Shakespeare, “What light thru yonder window breaks” it is the sum. Good morning everyone.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Good morning.

REP. SIMANSKI (62ND):

I stand and I appreciate the opportunity Madam Speaker to speak in opposition to this Bill for
three main reasons. First of all I think it is another nail in the coffin that Hartford, excuse me, that Connecticut is unfriendly to business. Second I believe that it will really severely reduce the number of these minimum wage jobs that are available and third, I sincerely believe it will have a despaired impact on our inner cities. So before I begin addressing my three reasons for opposing this Bill I want to address what I think is a mischaracterization in the title of the Bill, AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM FAIR WAGE. I don’t see this as the minimum wage I see this is as the entry level wage. What we are talking about is the wage that an employer gives to their employee when they first start out learning the trade, learning the skill and as they improve and they become more valuable to the employer, if the employer is able, they give them a salary increase. So I will be referring to this as the entry level wage not minimum wage.

So the first reason and again this is another nail in the coffin that Connecticut is unfriendly to business. It is no secret to anyone in this
Chamber, we rank very low, we’re at the bottom of states that are unfriendly to business. A few years ago Governor Malloy said that Connecticut is open for business. Well that didn’t turn out to be true. We elected a new governor from the business community and the first thing he does is come up with a minimum wage Bill that sends a message to the business community that again, we’re unfriendly. Yesterday, yeah it was yesterday, we passed a Bill that talked about trying to market Connecticut as enticing business but, Madam Speaker are actions speak louder than our words. When we are passing these antibusiness bills our actions speak for themselves. For me I can’t comprehend why Connecticut is so unfriendly to business. If we want our economy to turn around, if we want to create jobs, if we want to create opportunities we need to have businesses here. When I stop and I think about it and try to figure out why we are so unfriendly to business I think some people in this Chamber create the illusion or the fiction in their mind that all business employers are evil people and
in my mind’s eye I think many people in this Chamber think that all business owners are the equivalent of Ebenezer Scrooge sucking every last ounce of blood out of the business and abusing their employees. Well the reality of this situation is that here in Connecticut the exact is true especially for our small and medium sized businesses and they are the businesses that create 80 percent of the jobs here in the State of Connecticut. The reality of the situation especially for our small businesses and those business owners are no better off than Bob Cratchit. They’re lucky if they pay for their expenses after they pay for their salaries that they in fact can take home enough money to put food on their table. So we need to change our perspective all business are not evil, all businesses are not the equivalent of Ebenezer Scrooge. The reality in Connecticut is most businesses are no better off than Bob Cratchit.

The second reason I’m opposed to this Bill is because it will severely decrease the number of these low level wages that are available. Many
hours ago our good Representative Candelora got up and spoke about how people will not be employing people at these low level wages because it’s just not going to work for them. A good example is in my community, a friend of mine runs a small landscaping business, Peggy and David. Now David does all the outside work, he does all the landscaping, the mowing, the fertilizing, putting shrubs in and cleaning, yard clean-up end season and his wife Peggy she does all the business of ordering, of sending out invoices, taking care of everything that an office would take care of. Now when I first met them in 2010 when I was campaigning David at that time was telling me that in the height of their business they had ten of these low level employees they would hire on a seasonal basis. By 2010 they were already down to six because of the state of the economy and because they were losing customers. When I just spoke to them recently at a block party David was saying he doesn’t think he will be able to employ any new employees this year. Now the thing about Peggy and David is they were never blessed
with children. In fact the people who they consider their family are the people that they hired over the years to help them in their landscape business. In fact they have pictures on a bulletin board of all these people they hired over the years, of their children and that is their family. And David was decrying the fact that as he loses customers as he has to pay more for his supplies that, well he is just really upset that he won’t be able to employ any of these new low level wage earners this year and in fact for the first time ever since he has been in business, he is upset because he might have to go out and work on Sunday’s and that is against his moral principles and in fact he might have to take his wife Peggy out to assist him and she rides a mean mower according to him. So I think it will definitely dry up the amount of jobs available and worse yet we are forcing the people who can automate to automate. And the sad thing about that is once a job is turned over to automation it is gone forever. We heard a good Representative DeMello talking about how automation has affected his life. Once that
automation comes to the place it is there forever.

And the third reason that I think we should not pass this Bill is I believe it will have an impact on our inner-cities. Now I obviously don’t represent the city, I represent four rural communities but every law that we pass effects everyone in the State of Connecticut. I care about everyone in the State of Connecticut and I’m sure everyone in this Chamber cares about everyone in the State of Connecticut. Why do I say it will have disparity impact on our cities, cause quite frankly as the number of low level jobs dry up, I don’t believe it will have that great of an impact on my four rural towns? When my two sons were growing up they worked in the tobacco fields, they worked in a local supermarket, they worked at the pharmacy. One of my sons worked at the YMCA at the climbing wall. I believe that some of those jobs will still be available for people in my district and if not, maybe the moms and dads will give their children a few more jobs to do around the house and increase the amount of allowance they give them and even if
that doesn’t happen there is plenty of recreational opportunities in the four towns that I represent. What happens to the teen and the young adults in our inner cities when there are no jobs available? Did you ever hear the term idle hands are the devil’s workshop? I’m afraid that if there are no low level jobs available the teens and young adults in our inner cities will have no alternative but to go out and look for other ways to keep themselves occupied and unfortunately I don’t think it will turn out well. And before I give up that I want every one to stop here and think about the opportunities not just for the job but think about the first low level job you ever had. Think about the feeling and the job and excitement that you got from that first paycheck. For me, I worked at Spadaro’s Appliance Sales and Service. I started down in the basement helping maintain the equipment and keep it clean and eventually I learned a trade. Yes, I learned to fix things like toasters and appliances. This was at a time when people actually repaired things rather than just throwin ‘em out and buying a new one. But
I can still remember the first paycheck I got and the reality that there were taxes taken out of that paycheck. Wow, that was an eye opener. Nonetheless, I can still remember how I spent that paycheck. I took my girlfriend who is now my wife of 46 years, out on a date. We went out to see a movie, we stopped at the A&W Root Beer stand and afterwards got two frosty mugs of root beer, some great hamburgers and awesome onion rings. But the thing that really sticks out in my mind was the following day when I said to my dad, thanks dad for loaning me the car and by the way I filled up the tank with gas. I can still see the tear in the corner of my dad’s eye. So colleagues when it come to vote on this Bill just think of the collateral damage. It sends a message to the business community; we don’t like you. It will undoubtedly dry up the amount of jobs that are available and I sincerely believe it will allow disparate impact on our inner cities. So I for one will be voting against this legislation and I urge my colleagues to do the same. Thank you, Madam Speaker.
ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further? Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good morning.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Good morning to you, sir with this bright shiny morning.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

I love your positivity. Energized me already. If I may I have a few comments and a few questions for the proponent of the Bill?

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter will you prepare yourself, madam. Representative Zullo you may proceed, sir.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know, I’ve only been here about eight weeks but I come from East Haven with a background of about eight years as the town attorney there and I’ve served in the capacity
as legal counsel to our town council and a number of our boards and commissions. When we have those boards and commissions we have rules. We have courtesies and I find it amazing in a town of 30,000 with a council of 15 people we have a rule that says you’re supposed to get backup before meetings 24 hours in advance. Seems like common sense, you want to be able to actually read something before you start to talk about it and vote on it. And then I get up here to this great legislature, the people’s house and I’m thinking this is going to be amazing. We have all this technology were we get to look at Bill and track them and here I am at ten o’clock at night, my first long night of the session and I get one of the most important Bills that we’re going to consider in this session literally five minutes before it hits the floor. It is deplorable. We should be ashamed of ourselves. We should have had ample time to consider this although I have now had ample time, I’ve had eight hours because of the long debate on it so, thank you all for that. But I have to say it epitomizes the disfunction that people out
in the normal world look at government and see. With that said, I do have some comments and then some questions. You know, I understand that about ten percent of our workforce is employed in the food service industry. According to the numbers I’ve seen about 154,000 employees, almost 8,000 eating and drinking locations in Connecticut. My first question to the proponent is, in Section 3 what is the point and purpose of the study that is called for?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

The purpose of the study is to study the impact of tip-wage workers.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

And through you, Madam Speaker.
Does this legislation as it is written currently already effect tip-wage workers?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

It does not.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Okay just give me a moment to reflect on the Bill. In section (d) 2 and 3 of that section does it not address the employers responsibilities with respect to employees who earn tips?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

If the good gentleman could please repeat the section that he is referring to.
Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

I’m sorry, I will refer to lines. It would be essentially between lines 119 and 143, does the legislation as currently presented not refer to and reflect employers responsibilities with respect to employees who earn tips?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

This does refer to tip-wage earners and what we have done in this Bill it actually says that there will be no impact as far as the wage increase or index when it comes to their wages. That what they are currently makin in statute which is $8.23 for a bartender and $6.38 for a service worker will remain in effect throughout the duration of this Bill upon passage.
Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the proponent’s explanation of the mechanics of the legislation. I guess my question is why are we passing a Bill that affects nearly ten percent of our workforce when we haven’t done the research upfront to understand the issue?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Not quite sure what he’s lookin for me to respond to. The current statute that is in effect in this State addresses tip-wage workers. We’re sayin that whatever we could have done which was initially the Bill that came out of Appropriations would have given them a wage increase over the four years which is now four and a half years because we want an extra six months on this and it would of
indexed it just like the regular minimum wage with the ECI but in this Bill and this section he is referring to there would be no wage increase and there will be no increase that will be indexed linked to the ECI. So I’m not sure if that answers his question and if it does not, I would ask the good gentleman to please restate it for clarity.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Once again I appreciate the proponent’s explanation of the mechanics and I won’t phrase it as a question, I’ll phrase it as a comment, I find it disconcerting then that we are calling for a study in the final section of this legislation regarding tip-wage workers and then yet we are legislating on it. Why are we legislating on it if we then want the study? Why are we studying things after we are proposing to pass them? You know, I was on Finance, Revenue and Bonding I was presented with a plan on paid FMLA. I asked simple questions
about the backup, how do we get to these numbers, does anyone know utilization rates for FMLA? Nobody has numbers, oh, we’ll study it after. Let’s pass it now and we’ll figure out the details later. That’s what I feel like we’re doing with this.

We’re being presented with a piece of legislation that say, we’re gonna do this to tip-wage workers but then we’re gonna study it afterwards. How could we do that? How is that responsible? You know, another question, another big concern of mine is home ownership. I’m a real estate attorney by trade. I do hundreds of closings each year and one of the question I have for the proponent is will this Bill at $15 dollars an hour for minimum wage serve as a gateway to create more homeownership opportunities for State workers?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

It does not affect State workers if I’m
understanding the question correctly.

    Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

    Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

    I’ll rephrase the question. Does this Bill help people who work in Connecticut to have an easier time owing homes or acquiring homes through home ownership?

    Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

    Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

    Through you, Madam Speaker.

    I would hope so. It would put them on that track.

    Through you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

    Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

    So again I spend a lot of time working in the real estate industry as a real estate attorney and
in that capacity I happen to know quite a bit about how people end up qualifying for mortgages. And if you take the wages of two minimum wage earners at the maximum level right now at the $15 dollars an hour they would make about $62,400 dollars per year. If you take that down to the month that is about $5,200 dollars and the mortgage industry there is a pretty reliable standard that says your mortgage can’t exceed 30 percent of your monthly income and your mortgage plus your debt, all your credit cards and other obligations can’t exceed 40 percent of your monthly income. Well the average home price in Connecticut right now is $244,500 dollars and if somebody is lucky enough to qualify for a CHFA loan which is an incredible program we offer; they have to come up with a mortgage of $237,165 dollars that would be three percent down if they didn’t get a down payment assistance loan. With taxes in East Haven which by the way is one of the most competitive no rates in the State of Connecticut due to the fact that we have held the line on spending and lowered our debt, that equates to about $5,387
dollars in taxes for the year or $448.93 when you add that to a mortgage payment of $1202, $448 for taxes and approximately $100 dollars for insurance you get $1,750 dollars, that 30 percent threshold for two minimum wage workers at 15 percent is $1560 dollars. It is disappointing, it is disconcerting that this arbitrary number of $15 dollars is being used and yet it does not even qualify two minimum wage workers to qualify for a mortgage on the average house in the State of Connecticut.

Another question I have is does the Bill require employers to pay individuals who already work 40 hours a week the minimum $15 dollars an hour?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

For clarity is the good gentleman asking about overtime?

Through you.
Representative Zullo.

I can certainly clarify. I’m talking about people who moonlight. So let’s say there is somebody who already makes $40 or $50, or $60,000 dollars a year, in a good paying, hardworking job and they would like to moonlight, maybe pick up a job for 10, 15 or 20 hours somewhere else. Does this Bill require an employer to pay that person $15 dollars an hour?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Representative Porter.

Through you, Madam wage [Laughter].

What time is it? Oooo, okay. If you are looking for work in the State of Connecticut and this Bill becomes law, and the minimum wage is $15 dollars per hour, the employer will be required to pay you $15 dollars an hour.

Through you, Madam Chair.
ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

So again I understand the social equity part of this legislation, I understand that we’re trying to do things to lift workers out of poverty, create opportunities for people to have better lifestyles but I am also seeing that there is a potential for compromise in this situation. You have people who are moonlighting, trying to earn extra income so maybe they can go on an extra vacation, supplement their lifestyle but you don’t necessarily want to put a strain on businesses. I’ve always thought maybe there is a way we can say if somebody’s employment is secondary, if it’s moonlighting they could pay a subminimum wage to that person because the goal of that extra money is not to lift them out of poverty it is to provide supplemental income. Again, moonlighting just something to consider. You know, early on in this session again, I keep going back to it but we took up the issue of paid family leave and I think it is interesting that under the
proposed minimum wage as I’m seeing it today, and I’m just gonna make sure I get these numbers right because I don’t want to misspeak, a person can qualify for 100 percent wage replacement if he or she earns $2,325 dollars in any of the five quarters proceeding a potential claim. Now think about that. That mean a minimum wage employee at $15 dollars an hour if this FMLA Bill passes will qualify for paid FMLA with 100 percent wage replacement for 12 weeks of work after 3.8 weeks of work. A person could potentially end up pay under $50 dollars.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo. We ask that you please discuss minimum wage.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

It is going to get to minimum wage right now. And end up collecting $7,200 dollars in benefits on a $15 dollar minimum wage.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo. Excuse me sir, we ask that you find your way there, sir. Thank you.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):
I will do my best, Madam Speaker but the words minimum wage just came out of my mouth. Again I was just trying to get to the point that a minimum wage worker will earn 600 percent on that return, on that less than $50 dollar return. That will cripple businesses. You are creating an opportunity where workers will work very minimal time at a much higher minimum wage rate and end up crippling businesses if they have to take a claim, be out of work only to be replaced at the same $15 dollar minimum wage.

Getting back to learners and beginners, I understand that this Bill has a carveout. It did have a carveout for learners and beginners. Is that carveout still in the Bill?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Zullo.
REP. ZULLO (99TH):

And is it my understanding and am I correct that it calls for an entry period of 90 days?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I’m gonna be clear because I’m not sure exactly what the question is. So if you are 16 or 17 there is a training wage that you will be paid 85 percent of the minimum wage for 90 days.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

And then I will follow it up again.

For you, Madam Speaker.

So if you are 18 or older though there is no training wage, you start out directly at $15 dollars per hour or whatever that minimum wage is at the time, is that correct?
Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

And through you, Madam Speaker.

Is that 90 calendar days or is that 90 physically worked days?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

We still on the subject of the elimination of learners and beginners wages, the 90 days does not apply.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):
Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

I’m sorry.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Could you just repeat Representative I just didn’t understand it?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Porter would you mind repeating it madam?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Not at all, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

If we are still talkin about the elimination of the learners and beginners wages in this Bill the 90 day does not apply.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

So then for 16 and 17 year olds though it would apply and my question was for 16 and 17 year olds is
that 90 calendar days or 90 physically worked days? Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. That is specified in the Bill, I would presume but I am not sayin it is definitely true because it is not defined in the Bill but I would assume that it is calendar days.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Zullo.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Madam Speaker, so another friendly suggestion would be that we clarify that because we’ve had significant issues in collective bargaining agreements across the state where unclear language about physically worked days or calendar days has led to huge issues with CVA, union grievances, etc. So and my suggestion would be to change it to physically worked days because if you take those 90
days and boil it down to actual weekdays you would get about 65 weekdays which dramatically reduces the amount of time that an employer has to train a 16 or 17-year-old. Now I have not had the privilege of having children yet but I understand from any people who do that 16 and 17 year olds can occasionally can be incorrigible, difficult to train and so I would assume that every precious minute that you have to train somebody like that would be helpful and so it would be my recommendation that we change that to 90 physically worked days. It would also be my recommendation that we reinstitute that entry period for people over 18. Again I am a small business owner, we have employed a number of people during the time I’ve been a young attorney. It is very hard to find good help; it is very hard to keep good help but one of the things that we spend most of our time and most of our money on is training and it is very discouraging when you spend time training somebody only to have them leave for whatever circumstance it may be. They move on, they move, the get a different job, they decide to take up a
different occupation, but to be able to pay somebody a slightly lower wage during that training period, not just if they are 16 or 17 provides businesses with a significant, significant advantage as far as continuing to operate efficiently. I pushed the button tonight to speak about something entirely different than where I started but all of the debate tonight brought all of these issue to my mind and before I continue I do actually want to commend the good Chair of Labor. I am very impressed with the stamina and the commitment of the entire legislature but you in particular, I am very impressed, so kudos to that. As a young legislator it is very inspiring. I started again tonight thinking that I wanted to talk about municipalities. I am very municipal oriented again I’ve served at the town attorney in East Haven for actually the first eight years of my legal career. One of my biggest concerns about this legislation is it’s cost to municipalities. In East Haven we have some incredible programs one of them is our summer work program. Through that program we employ 57 people
ages 16 all the way up their early 20s, through
summer jobs in a variety of contacts throughout
town. In our town hall, in our legal department, in
our public works department, down by our beach, in
our recreation department. We also employ another
50 specifically in our recreation department and we
do it in conjunction with the Workforce Alliance,
through some grant funding, through the State but
primarily through funding supplied by the Town of
East Haven. During the last year we employed 57
people for 10 hours a week at the wage of $10.10 at
a total cost of over four weeks of $23,028. Under
the legislation as proposed that cost would go up to
$34,200 dollars an increase of $11,172 dollars or
almost 34 percent. Now I know that may not seem
like a lot for people who come from big cities where
the budgets are tens and hundreds of millions of
dollars but in East Haven, we’re in the middle of
the State nearly exactly where it was when I first
got there, and where out budget has grown very
little thanks to our conservative fiscal policies
$11,172 dollars is a lot. Now add to that the
increased cost of $19,600 dollars which represents the increased cost of employing the other 50 individuals in our recreation department and you have a total increase of $30,000. Again for a big city maybe that’s not a lot of money but in East Haven were we can employ two or three more paraprofessionals with that money in our schools, that is real money. That money makes a real difference and so because of that, Madam Speaker the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment. It is LCO No. 8201 and at this time I would ask the Clerk to please call the Amendment and that I may be allowed to summarize.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8201 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule “G”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “G” LCO No. 8201 offered by Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora, etal.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber
to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection, is there objection? Hearin none, Representative Zullo you may proceed with summarization, sir.

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Again, I am in possession of Amendment LCO 8201 it is an Amendment to the legislation as presented which seeks to exempt municipalities from the requirements of the legislation as presented. As I’ve indicated already I am very concerned about the cost of this legislation to municipalities. I’ve demonstrated it’s clear fiscal impact right in East Haven and I can only begin to imagine what impact it will have in other cities and towns across the State with budgets of a much greater magnitude than East Haven. So for all those reasons I move adoption and I ask that when the vote be taken that it be taken by role.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

A rollcall is so ordered, sir. The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule “G”, excuse me. Will you remark on the Amendment? Will you remark on the Amendment before
you?

REP. ZULLO (99TH):

Madam Speaker, if I may.

Representative Zullo.

Just colloquially and I will turn over the mic to anybody else who is interested in speaking on it. I will note there is a tradition about the first time a young legislator introduces something, I understand there probably won’t be very many red lights turning green and flickering back and forth but I appreciate the debate this morning and thank you for the opportunity to introduce the Amendment.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you. Will you remark further on the Amendment before you? The Chair asks that if you would like to remark on the Amendment that you raise your hand. Representative Piscopo, sir you have the floor.

REP. PISCOPO (76TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am glad this Amendment came out. It was kind of overlooked I thought with all of the debate tonight so I’m glad
my colleague brought it out. In municipalities it’s very, very important as the gentleman said that brought the Amendment out, it doesn’t sound like a lot of money but for some of our small towns it does add up. I called my first selectman in Harwinton, I emailed him, and he said to the Town of Harwinton, they maybe hire two or three kids for the summer and they hire two or three kids coming back from college every year and this is going to cost about $5,000 to $10,000 dollars, that’s a lot of money for a little town. You know, they kinda pick up the parks and that kind of thing. But in the region where we are Harwinton Burlington it is closer to $25,000 dollars for the regional school district where they put some returning college kids to work. Also in Thomaston we have the Nystrom’s Dam and the Thomaston Opera House and we hire one or two returning college kids there to so if we could exempt municipalities from this onerous provision in the Bill it would be a good break. It would be a real break for our taxpayers, our local property taxpayers. Thank you, Madam Speaker.
ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment before you? Will you remark further on the Amendment before you? Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise to encourage my colleagues to please vote no on this Amendment as I do not support it.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, several weeks ago I read an article, I believe it was in the local paper around Manchester that the City of Manchester had fired about 20 people in anticipation of this minimum wage going into effect. And it occurred to me that many people that work for municipalities do work at minimum wage and that the minimum wage that municipalities pay their workers comes directly from our tax money, so what we’re doing is by raising the minimum wage on
municipalities we are forcing them to raise taxes on the people of those municipalities and those people of the municipalities often work there, so what we’re doing is we are raising wages to raise taxes to raise wages. It becomes a circular argument the same way that raising wages artificially for people who work at McDonald’s is necessarily going to raise the cost of hamburgers at McDonald’s so when those workers want to buy a hamburger it costs them more. So they actually are not gaining anything because all of the costs are going up equally. So especially with regard to municipalities where it is a direct increase, where if we increase the wages artificially on a municipality, that municipality necessarily has to increase taxes on the people of that municipality. Therefore I encourage my colleagues to support this Amendment. Thank you.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further?

Representative Frey

REP. FREY (111TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know, we’ve
debated raising the minimum wage a couple of years ago. Let me start by saying for general notation I missed a vote on Representative Lavielle’s Amendment earlier, I had to drive home to let my dog out, 148 miles, who’s counting. So on the way back I stopped in Southington at a gas station to fill-up after two trips from Richfield to Hartford in one day uses a lot of fuel and I was talking to the manager of the gas station, a little mini-mart. I picked up an ice tea and he’s like, just getting off work now, it was about one o’clock I guess. Nah actually yeah kinda getting off but goin back. So he saw my name tag and said what are you guys voting on tonight. So I said minimum wage. He said well I hope you don’t vote for the minimum wage increase; this was a manager of a little gas station mini-mart on Queens Street. So I said that’s interesting why are you suggesting that. He’s like, well because our overnight shifts I just about break even, in fact they are kinda of lock leaders in reality, I’m the manager of this store, the owner owns three and the owner had suggested that if the minimum wage goes to $15
dollars an hour we are no longer gonna be open for 24 hours a day. We are gonna close at eleven and open at 5:30 in the morning. I just thought that was kind of interesting. But the last two years when we debated we talked about possibly raising minimum wage increase up here the two largest complaints, concerns that I had expressed to me from Richfield was the town’s parks and rec department and the Boys and Girls Club. And the Boys and Girls Club had been talked about before, Representative Betts talked about his experience with his local Boys and Girls Club. Parks and Rec in Richfield is kind of like a YMCA. In fact it used to be a YMCA, the town took it over and they hire about 80 high school students and college students, not just summer camps, cause I know summer camp will be exempt and they have an indoor swimming pool, they offer babysitting services and classes and tutoring and what not that the parks director was concerned about this extra funding and how it would result in firing employees. In fact my own niece, I know she’s not watching this because she is probably on
her way to Newton High School but she is on the Newtown High School swim team and looking at career opportunities for 16 year olds she took a one-day lifeguard class which she passed and she has been hired by the Town of Newtown to be a lifeguard, not just for the summer but for at least the next two years and so she is thrilled that instead of making $10.10 an hour she’s got the opportunity to make $15 bucks an hour after taking a one-day lifeguard class which she passed, I’m sure she’ll excel at it as she does on the swim team and everything else she does. So it’s proven to me in towns, we have a whole bunch of unfunded mandates on the books already, we’re looking at passing on teacher retirement costs, that’s undoubtedly going to be part of the budget, it was approved by the Appropriations Committee so this is just another unfunded mandate on municipalities so therefore I would urge support of this to exclude municipalities from this increase in minimum wage. Thank you, Madam Chairman, Speaker.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the
Amendment before us? Representative Delnicki. You have the floor, sir.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I rise to support the Amendment and I just want to share my background with everyone. I’ve spent over 20 years in municipalities government starting in the Inland Wetlands Commission, the Board of Education, the town council rising to deputy mayor and mayor. And I can tell you one thing as a municipal leader when Hartford sneezed in the legislature we would catch cold in the municipal government. There is a lot of talk about unfunded mandates and this mandate here would place a huge burden on the taxpayers of my community South Windsor. My Parks and Rec Director Ray Favreau did a calculation and based on the 200 people that they hire for after school programs, for summer programs, etc. and typically they are over 18 years old or 18, so they don’t get the training wage or the entry wage I should say and that number if $400,000 that the taxpayers would have to come up with, not my words, his words, his calculations and
he is the person in the know when it comes to that. There is one thing I learned about him as Director of Parks and Recreation, he knew his numbers and he was always on spot. He was on spot to the point where they actually made him, I believe it is President of Parks and Rec Association. But getting back to the heart of the matter when it comes to municipalities with the possibility that municipalities are going to be having to accept teacher pension costs and now this mandate [Background conversations] falling on their shoulders. It’s gonna place a tremendous burden on the taxpayers. Ray [Background talking] is faced with a couple of choices there, either pass the cost on to the parents that place their children in the programs which that in and of itself places a burden on them, and in some cases will make those programs unaﬀordable, get rid of some of the programs, reduce staffing and create a situation where the programs are not of the same caliber and quality that they were in the past and conceivably by reducing staffing place some of the children in
jeopardy of not having appropriate staffing level to
insure that everything is under control and that
everyone is safe and sound a condition that no one
in this Chamber would want to see in a community
[Background chatter] and that is just South Windsor.
Now if you take a look at what the fiscal note is on
this and you take a look a municipal impact there is
a listing here and this is based on full
implementation, small town population less than
20,000, $50,000 dollars. Now what would $50,000
dollars buy a town? Police officer, if you had a
professional fire department a firefighter, a public
works person. It buys you town services that either
you will cut or you will have to raise taxes, that
simple. Small city population 30,000 to 50,000 and
again these are OLR numbers, not mine. Population
30,000 to 50,000 ranges from $100,000 dollars and
$300,000 dollars and what would that buy? Well if
its in $100,000 dollar range a couple of entry level
police officers, firefighters, public works people.
In the $300,000 dollar range that triples in what
that would pay for or conversely what would have to
be cut from their budget to balance the budget because again cities and towns and municipalities are facing a tough time based on what is coming out of the legislature, what’s been proposed by the executive branch and what could easily occur. Medium sized cities population 50 to 80,000, $400,000 dollars to $600,000 dollars in additional costs and again how is that gonna be made up, higher taxes or cut services. And large cites population 100,000 plus, $800,000 dollar to $1 million dollars in additional costs, additional taxes or reduce services, laid off workers and those are the consequences and again these are not my numbers these are the numbers that come from the OLR Report.

Now, bear with me for a moment while I find the other chart pertaining to the reduction in services or the costs I should say and I think I found it right here. On page 4 of 5 it lists FY 2020, FY 2021 and FY 2022 in the case of Bridgeport the additional costs in FY 20 would be $250,000 dollars; FY 21 $500,000 dollars; and FY 2022 a million dollars. Manchester my neighboring community FY
2020, $135,600 dollars, FY 2021 $307,900 and FY 2022 $550,400 dollars in additional costs. Torrington FY 2020 they get off easy $42,300 dollars, FY 2021 $96,000 dollars and FY 2022 $172,000 dollars in additional costs. These are real numbers, these are real issues that towns and cities are gonna have to face if we do not pass this Amendment and that is why this Amendment is so critical, you think about the folks back home that you represent because every city and town is going to be looking at additional costs if this Amendment is not passed. Every city and town is going to have to make a tough decision, do we raise taxes or do we cut spending and if we cut spending what do we do, who do we lay-off, what program gets cancelled, what equipment doesn’t get replaced, do we decided that we are not goin to buy new police cars, do we decided that a firetruck doesn’t need to be replaced, do we decided a public works plow truck which insures the safety of people to get to and from their homes in winter doesn’t get purchased. These are real numbers. These are real challenges. This is an issue that most cities and
towns will be faced with and have to come up with a difficult solution anyway you look at it if this Amendment is not passed. I wholeheartedly support this Amendment. Cities and towns right now are watching what’s going on here in Hartford and they are bracing, they are bracing for what the final results are gonna be and they’re watching everything that is going on here because they are going to be faced with that mess to clean up based on what the numbers are. So again, I urge all my colleagues here in the Chamber, think about the folks back home, think about the taxpayers in your community, think about the programs that are gonna be affected and think about the services that will be cut in some fashion and support this Amendment. And I thank you, I thank the proponent for the proposal of this Amendment and again I thank you for the opportunity to speak on this.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Petit.
REP. PETIT (22ND):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in support of the Amendment. I represent the 22nd District Plainville and New Britton and was asked by the mayor and the town manager as to whether there could be some carveout or exceptions made for municipalities. In Plainville they are concerned that the kids 16 and 17 they hire for the summer they are gonna have to cut back by 20 to 40 percent depending on what ends up happening especially as previous speakers have referred to whether or not the teachers pension comes down to the towns as well creating more funding issues for the town. In addition I have some specific numbers for New Britton from the Director of Parks and Recreation Community Services. Some of this will be ameliorated by the 90 day rule but their total costs for summer programs is on the order of $368,000 dollars with swimming and aquatics being $7,6000 dollars, summer camp $55,000 dollars and perhaps most importantly the afterschool programs for a lot of kids in town is about $115,000 dollars and a lot
of that done by folks over the age of 18 so they won’t qualify under the 90 day regulations. So they are quite concerned that without some changes or carveouts for the municipalities that the number and quality of services they supply to the residents in New Britton will be adversely impacted that is why I urge my colleagues to support the Amendment and I think the good Representative for his proposal and thank you, Madam Speaker for the time.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment? If not will the Staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Will the Members please take your seats, the machine will be open.

[Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER(145TH):
Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “G”

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ACTING SPEAKER REPRESENTATIVE MILLER (145TH):

The Amendment fails [Gavel]. Will there be further remarks on the Bill as amended? Will there be further remarks on the Bill as amended? Representative Palm, you have the floor, madam.

REP. PALM (36TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in enthusiastic support of this Bill and I want to
thank my colleague Representative Porter for her persistence and her perseverance. I am going to limit my remarks to how this Bill will effect women. We heard a lot of debate tonight about young people, temporary workers, summertime help the reality is that the typical minimum wage is female and approaching middle age and women of color are disproportionately also in this category, two-thirds in fact of minimum wage workers are female despite being only 47 percent of the overall workforce. Why does this matter because minimum wage jobs are less likely to be unionized, to have paid sick days, have health insurance? In fact the one thing they are more likely to have is incidents of sexual harassment especially in the service industries. So when the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that over the next ten years the primary job growth is going to be four of the five top jobs that are gonna be soaring are female dominated and low wage. This is a cause of concern for women’s economic stability in the future. Long-term it means fewer assets and because we live longer we will longer in poverty.
We have fewer Social Security benefits over time all of which is a drain on the public system. And I would like to debunk one myth that has been repeated over and over again which is that minimum wage jobs are just an entry point. The fact is that after one year only five percent of minimum wage workers have in-fact advanced to a higher wage job. And one-third of prime age minimum wage workers are stuck in that job three years later. So that is a reality that we have to recognize that these can become entrenched permanent low wages for people, again, especially women including those who are primary caregivers for their families. According to Forbes two-thirds of American families are headed by women or co-headed by women. So to summarize where we have the best job growth across the country were in states where in fact they raised the minimum wage, in states with no minimum wage raise the growth was only six percent, among states that have minimum wage increase it was 13 percent, more than double. I think that is really significant. We cannot continue to bemoan the fact that we are losing young
people in this State, that we have gender based wage
gap that is pernicious, *Forbes Magazine* not exactly
a lefty bastion or a feminist scribe, *Forbes*
*Magazine* says the “the best way to attack gender
based wage gap is to start with minimum wage workers
because of their predominance as women.” So as FDR
said in 1933, “This is not about subsistence wages,
this is about a living wage,” and he gave all
Americans hope and belief in themselves and I think
we owe it to our fellow citizens to do the same.
Thank you very much.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Will you remark
further on the Bill as Amended? Representative
Dubitsky on the Bill. you have the floor, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few questions for
the proponent of the Bill if I may?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

It looks as though Representative Porter is
prepared, Representative Dubitsky, please proceed,
sir.
REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

We have discussed or many of the people in this Chamber have discussed over the last several hours this subsection 5 of Section 1 which is lines 51-57 a number of times and frankly I’m still confused as to how it works. So I’m gonna direct some of my questions to that section. I understand that it removes the learners and beginners and it now applies to all persons under the age of 18 except emancipated minors.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Are there any other exceptions to the rate set in this subsection for people under the age of 18 years old other than emancipated minors.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Could the good gentleman please repeat the
Representative Dubitsky, can you please rephrase the question, sir?

Are there any exceptions to the wage established in this section for persons under the age of 18 years old except being an emancipated minor? Are there any other exceptions?

Through you.

Representative Dubitsky what section of the Bill?

It’s Section 1, subsection 5, lines 51-57.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Summer camps and agricultural workers.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Where would I find the applicable rate for those two categories of workers?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Actually it is also disabled workers and domestic workers. The summer camps are exempt, agricultural workers, domestic workers and it is not stated what the wage is in the Bill. We did not change any of the laws pertaining to this. It is whatever the current statute is.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky, I believe she said it is current law, sir.
REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So for example if my daughter would be 17 next year was working perhaps at a strawberry farm would this section, Section 1, sub (5) affect her wage?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

I do believe the good gentleman said she was 17 which would make her, all persons under the age of 18 years so the answer would be yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, so my daughter would fit within this section so if she were to work next year, lets say she started working in April and she was going to be paid the minimum amount legal under this Bill, how much would her employer be required to pay her?
Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

If I April she is 17 she would be paid 85 percent of the minimum wage.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And what would that minimum wage be at that time?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter do you understand the question, ma’am?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do believe he asked what would be the minimum wage in April 2020 if I’m not mistaken?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Is that correct, Representative Dubitsky?

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

April of 2020, yes.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That would be $11.00 dollars, 85 percent of $11.00 dollars.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I didn’t hear what the good proponent has said.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

I believe she said $11.00 dollars but I will let her rephrase. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That is correct, the minimum wage would be
$11.00 dollars and it would be 85 percent of that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So if my math is correct. If my math is correct she would be making $9.35 starting in April. Now it says that she would make that for 90 days, 90 days would be April, May, June so at the end of June is it correct that she would no longer be making $9.35 but she would be making $11.00 dollars?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What if she only
worked half time? When would she start making $11 dollars if it is 90 days and she is only working half-days does that spread it out to 180 calendar days?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

   Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

   Ninety days is 90 days no matter how many hours you work in the day.

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

   Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

   Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I interpret that to mean that even if she works halftime it would still, she would still start at $11 dollars starting in June. My question would be then what if she only worked 2 days a week?

   Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

   Representative Porter, do you care to respond?
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I wonder how the employer would know how much to pay my daughter come end of June if they are required to pay $11 dollars or if they could continue to pay $9.35. So my question would be how would the employer determine how much to pay by daughter in June?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter, do you care to respond?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky, I think she is answering the question, she is not going to respond, she has already answered 90 days is 90 days. Is
that correct Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
That is indeed correct.
Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do think that it is very problematic that we are going to pass a statute here with no indication of how an employer is supposed to determine how much to pay their employee. It would seem to me that that would need to be addressed because otherwise we’re gonna have employers out there that are potentially subject to complaints and violations without anyway, any guidance by the legislature as to how to even figure out how much they are supposed to pay their employees.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
The good proponent indicated that the exception for agricultural workers is in current statute,
however she also indicated that my daughter working at a strawberry farm would be subject to Section 1, sub (5). So again I am wondering how an employer would know which of these sections is applicable whether it is the existing statute or it is this new Bill?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It would be the same 85 percent irregardless.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Okay, well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I am assuming that the good Chairwoman is talking about General Statutes 31-58(a) which talks about the minimum wage for minors in government and agricultural employment. But in that statute there is no 90 day provision. My daughter would be making
the same amount throughout the season or if she worked fulltime during the year, throughout the year. So again, how does an employer know whether my daughter is working under 31-58(a) the agricultural section or under Section 1 sub(5) of this current Bill?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you for your patience Representative Dubitsky. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If it is an agriculture employer he would know. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Okay, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would again say that it is problematic if it is difficult to say whether or not the employee falls under this revised section with regard to the rate paid to persons under 18 or whether it is 31-58 (a) which deals with
it because the provisions are different and without guidance from the legislature in this Bill or in current statute I can foresee serious problems and perhaps complaints and violations by a, against an employer. Now there is in this Bill, in that subsection an in 31-58 (a) there are provisions for reduced minimum wage for certain employees that are under 18. Now in Section 2 (e) of this Bill which is lines 144-148, 144-148 of the Bill, it says that “no employer may take an action to displace an employee including but not limited to a partial displacement of an employee, such as reducing employee hours and benefits” etc. for “the purpose of hiring persons under the age of 18 years old at below the minimum fair wage.” So what it’s saying is, my understanding is that if you’ve got somebody who is working at full minimum wage or above, you cannot hire a person that is under 18 at one of these reduced wages and replace that employee. My question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is does that include, does that prohibition on
displacing full paid workers does that apply both to 31-58(a) as well as those workers working under Section 1, sub (5)?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

With all due respect I do feel like this has been covered earlier in the debate.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I still have the question, I clearly was not, did not get the information that I needed from the previous debate so I am asking the question? I will ask it again if necessary.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please repeat the question, sir.
REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In lines 144-148, there is a prohibition on displacing workers that are being paid full minimum wage or above with workers that are being paid below minimum wage and my question is does that provision apply both to Section 1, subsection (5) and also General Statutes 31-58 (a) or does it only apply to one or the other of them?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Both.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):
Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So this provision now in Section 2 sub (e) which is lines 144-148, now we know that it applies, it also prohibits an employer that is employing people under 31-58 (a) from
displacing fulltime, I mean full minimum wage
workers with less than minimum wage workers under
that provision. So under that provision, under 31-58
(a) there are two different salaries, two different
minimum wages. One is the 85 percent of the minimum
wage and that can be paid to a minor between the age
of 14 and 18 who is an agricultural employee. There
is also a separate minimum wage of 70 percent of
minimum wage and that can be paid to an agricultural
employee between the age of 14 and 18 if the
employer did not employ eight or more workers at the
same time at minimum wage the previous calendar
year. So my question is if the employer employed
eight employees the previous calendar year at
minimum wage and this calendar year the employer now
wants to employ somebody at below minimum wage is
that considered displacing a minimum wage employee?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Chamber will stand-at-ease [Gavel].

The Chamber will come back to Order. [Gavel]

Representative Dubitsky, I truly apologize for the
interruptions, sir we had a couple of things going. Could you just please repeat your question, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Absolutely. My question is under Lines 144-148 an employer may not displace with a below minimum wage employee somebody who is at minimum wage or above. So under 31-58 (a) an employer has an option to pay a 70 percent of minimum wage if they did not have eight employees or more in the previous calendar year. So what I am asking is if in this calendar year that employer hires a minor between the ages of 14 and 18 and has one less employee who is at minimum wage or above is that considered displacing a minimum wage employee under lines 144-148?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Mr. Speaker.

No, that is not displacement.

Through you.
REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So taking that to it’s logical conclusion if an employer would replace all of the minimum wage or above employees with 14 through 18 year olds would that be considered displacing a minimum wage or above employee?

Through you.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Mr. Speaker if he is using the word replace that does constitute, so the answer is yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

So let’s talk about these are agricultural works. In many instances they are seasonal such as my daughter starts working in April. So if in the previous year all of the employees, all the seasonal
employees were minimum wage or above, and the following year.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky, we’re gonna have to ask you to repeat the question, I will tell the Chamber please bring your conversations out in the hall, Representative Porter is having a hard time hearing the questions. Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So talking about seasonal workers that work from perhaps April through August or September. If in the previous year all of the workers, eight or more workers were minimum wage or above and the following year the employer hired all 14 through 18 year olds who they wanted to pay the reduced minimum wage would that be considered displacing employees under lines 144-148?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.
SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I’m done with my questioning for the moment, I think I’ll just make some remarks.

People in this State are leaving. We all know that; we see it in the news all the time. States all around us are growing, Connecticut is shrinking. Rich people are leaving, businesses are leaving. Why are they leaving because of the policies that this legislature has enacted in this State? Just ask ‘em. Go talk to people who are leaving. Talk to people who have moved to North Carolina, to Tennessee, to Texas, to Florida they’ll tell ‘ya. Just ask ‘em. Your constituents. I guarantee constituents of every person, every member of this Chamber have left because taxes are too high because we keep changing the rules, because we are trying to impose a vision of economics that doesn’t exist. It’s like defy physics, we’re trying to defy the basic laws of economics with our policies. Heavy
handed government control and heavy handed policies like this are driving people out. I’m sorry to say it but at the moment Connecticut is dying. We see it all over the place. We seen stores closing, businesses closing, people can’t sell their houses, people want to retire to get out of here, there’s a line to get out the door. It is very, very sad for once the most prosperous State in the Nation. And there are people in this very Chamber who are supporting this Bill who refuse to allow the market, even in their own businesses to work. So for example there are, there were people who testified that had businesses, had small businesses. They pay more than the minimum wage, let’s say they pay $15 dollars great and they’re pushing for the minimum wage. Why are they pushing for an increased minimum wage if they already pay their employees $15 dollars because they recognize that paying above minimum wage is anticompetitive that they are at a competitive disadvantage to their competitors in the area who are not paying that wage. So they recognize that it is not a sustainable business
model to pay more than everybody else. So what’s their solution, well they want to get the government to compel everybody else to pay more. We have members of this very Chamber who have been in the news all over the place in that very situation. If they want to pay more, great, let them pay more but don’t compel the rest of the State to practice anticompetitive business practices that defy the basic principles of economics. If Costco and Walmart and Amazon want to pay $20 dollars an hour great, let them. They will attract better candidates. If their competitors then want to attract good candidates let them pay more. But if the government compels everybody to that same level, there is no competition. It’s just government control. What we’re doing by raising the minimum wage beyond what is economically feasible is we’re cutting off the lower levels of the ladder of success. My daughter needs a job. She doesn’t need, she doesn’t have a mortgage, she doesn’t have to pay insurance, she doesn’t have to support a family, she doesn’t have a car payment, she doesn’t
have a tuition payment. She needs basic job skills. She needs to learn how to wake-up in the morning, how to get to work on time, how to do a good job. That’s what she needs to learn at 16 years old. That’s what young kids need to learn and if we artificially make the jobs that she would otherwise get too expensive for the employers, those employers simply won’t have that job. So if a job is worth $10 dollars an hour to an employer the employer says if I can pay somebody $10 dollars an hour or $10.10 in this instance I can employ somebody and it will be economically feasible for my business to do so, they will create that job and my daughter will get the opportunity to earn a little money and to get some basic job skills and to start on the ladder of success, to start down that road where she will then get a better job, and a better job and a better job. But if we tell that employer that although my daughter may only be worth $10.10 to that business that he must pay $15 dollars even though the job isn’t worth $15 dollar an hour, he is not gonna make that job available and my daughter will not get the
opportunity to learn those job skills. My daughter wants to work on a farm this year. This Bill will kill farms, literally, this Bill will literally kill farms in this State. Farms right now are teetering on the brink. We see farms closing down every day, dairies selling off their herds, fields going fallow, farmers retiring and nobody stepping up to take over afterwards. You know, farmers get for their milk about $17 dollars give or take for every 100 pounds of milk, that’s what they can sell it for, about $17 dollars for every 100 pounds of milk and it costs them $20 dollars per 100 weight to produce. So for every 100 pounds of milk in this State, farmers lose three dollars. You can’t sustain a business when you lose money on the product that you make or the service that you provide. So at the moment the State of Connecticut is providing somewhat of a subsidy to try to keep farmers alive. But why does it cost so much, why does it cost $20 dollars per 100 weight for a farmer to produce milk? A lot of that goes to labor. They have to pay the minimum wage or an agricultural wage
in some instances for younger kids but that is why it costs so much because of our policies, policies that we are imposing on these businesses. We are creating an environment where they cannot stay in business. We are driving farmers out of business. We are driving them out of this State. You can go to Aldi or Walmart buy a gallon of milk for a couple of bucks in Aldi I think it’s like less than two dollars for a gallon of milk. Well in Connecticut it costs over three dollars to produce that gallon of milk. So how does Aldi sell it for less than it costs to produce? Where do you think they get it? They don’t get it from Connecticut farmers. It’s too expensive cause we have to pay $10.10 an hour soon to be $15 dollars an hour. Where do they get it? They get it from Wisconsin. That’s where your milk comes from, that’s why it costs $1.89 for a gallon of milk in Aldi because they get it from Wisconsin and what the minimum wage in Wisconsin $7.25. They can produce milk and still stay in business but at $15 dollars an hour there is no way a farm can stay in business producing milk. Once
they sell of their herds they’re gone. They’re not coming back. You see it all over the place, all over the State, you see it up in the Windsor area. You see it down in the New London area, you see it in Middlesex, you see it in Litchfield even seen the few remaining farms in the Fairfield area. If they are not already closed, they are planning on closing. Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment it’s LCO 8266. I ask that the Amendment be called and I be given leave to summarize.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8266, shall be designated House Amendment Schedule “H”.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule “H” LCO No. 8266 offered by Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora, etal.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Dubitsky, do you care to comment on House “H”?

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker this Bill is fairly simple. It leaves the entire underlying Bill and simply adds a section at the end that says that it does not apply to workers who work in farming and agriculture and qualify as farming and agricultural workers under the Fair Labor Standards Act and that they would exempt from the increase in the minimum wage. I move for adoption and I ask that when the vote is taken it be taken my role.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Question before the Chamber is Adoption of House “H” and when the vote is taken it shall be taken by role. Further on House “H”? Further on House “H”? Further? If not, if not. The machine will be open. Excuse me, Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would urge my colleagues to reject the Amendment. Thank you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Thank you very much. Further on House “H”? Machine will be open please. [Ringing]
The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the board to make you’re your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked.

Will the Clerk please take and announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Amendment “A”

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ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

The Amendment is not agreed to [Gavel]. From the 88th District. [Background conversations] Thank
you, Mr. Clerk, that was Amendment “H”. From the wonder City of Hamden and the home of the Sleeping Giant although it has fewer hairs than it did a couple of years ago, Representative of the 88th, you have the floor.

REP. ELLIOTT (88TH):

I think we’re good, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

You’re welcome.

REP. ELLIOTT (88TH):

I rise in support of House Bill 5004. When I think about our economic system I think about what it means to create a fair and equitable game. So I have been an avid supporter of board games for a long time, my colleague Quinton Phipps right in front of me is someone who I play with often and recently there has been a divergence away from games like Risk and games like Monopoly and the reason for that is because very early on in these games it is easy to see who is going to win because there is a runaway effect that if you have an early lead you never lose it. So I think about when you play
Monopoly you want to make sure you have good rules. And without good rules people are going to become very frustrated with the game that they are playing. So when it comes to something like minimum wage and people start their life in poverty and they see people around them have advantages from birth whether this means that they go to a better school or maybe this means that there is more books in their households meaning they hear more words by the time that they reach college age, whatever the fact there is certain way that certain people, have certain advantages that give them this runaway effect and I believe it is one of the goals of government to try to counteract these effects in as good a way as we can. We are not necessarily looking for equality in outcome but at the very least we are looking for equality of access. Now once upon a time we had a completely open market when it came to labor and what happened was we used people and we did not pay them and we said that this was okay, this is just the way of the world. This is of course what slavery was and this is an extreme
example but we decided as a people that this was not an economic system that we wanted to abide by so we decided that we were going to create laws and rules that would dictate what was a fair economic system and that is allowing people to support themselves and not be treated as property. That was the first step in creating a structure where people had disposable income and you could have people create their own wealth no matter where they started from.

Fast forward centuries we are coming out of the Second World War and the mid-1940s and people are coming back from overseas and for four decades we have something called the great compression. That is when we rise up wages from the bottom and we limit the amount of wages at the top by having what someone now called punitive tax structure. The top tax rate was anywhere between 90 to 94 percent and you could go to college and work a part-time job and you could get out of college with essentially no debt and start putting money into your retirement and you could actually care for yourself and buy a home and buy a car and start a family and what we’re
seeing is now people are starting their families later. They can’t put money into retirement, they are saddled with debt for decades after college. The way the economy works now is not the way it used to work. And because inflation, if we don’t increase the minimum wage every year, there is basically a depletion of purchasing power year, over year, over year. So the goal here to increase the minimum wage is to essentially create a fair more just system where working to counteract the runaway effects. And the $15 dollars an hour is certainly not something that is in any sense exorbitant. We can look through decades and decades of were the minimum wage used to be and we know the economy works under these functions. If the minimum wage had kept pace with inflation from the 1970s when it was at it’s purchasing height, it would be around $21 dollars to $22 dollars an hour now. And we know an economy works with the wage that is that percentage of the overall GDP. We’ve already done it. We are now at essentially half of that purchasing power so when we think about why the
economy is going to stagnate it’s because people who are putting every single dollar they earn they cannot put that money back into the economy fast enough to stir on independent growth of new business. So I own two natural food stores, we employ 50 employees per. We can’t rely on one ultra-wealthy person to keep our business going. We rely on a slate of people who have disposable income. So you could say it’s good for GDP to have ultra-wealthy people who are making lots of money and that they invest it in their business through research and development and they hire more people because they are growing but they don’t actually help my business. What helps my business is more people with a little bit more money. These changes will be exceptionally helpful to my small business. These small changes will help our bottom line significantly. There is a study that came out about a decade ago that showed for every dollar we increase the minimum wage at a McDonald’s they would have to increase the average salary by ten cents, sorry for every dollar they increase the salary a
hamburger would cost ten cents more and that would completely eliminate the effects on the business. Similarly my mother has taught me that the metrics for our business should be paying about 15 percent of our gross income in salaries out to our employees. So what is gonna happen when we raise the minimum wage. Well it’s gonna change what that percentage is assuming we don’t change any of the hours we are going to see that 15 percent rise to 16, 17, 18 percent. So we have few options as a small business to counteract this. We can limit the amount of labor that we have which won’t really work, I mean the amount of labor that we need, we need, so we don’t just cut down hours, there is no way for us to do this. Maybe Stop-N-Shop would, maybe these large companies would but they’re gonna be automating anyway. So there is nothing we can do about that so we can’t really cut down on hours, we can’t really just fire people, we need our workers to do these jobs. We can pass on some of the costs to the consumers and that would be changing the cost of some of these goods by pennies but what’s also
gonna be happen, what’s also gonna happen and this is sort of hard to quantify is the fact that we’re gonna be doing so much more business, not only from the people that are working at the business but from people that are in the broader economy and what’s also gonna happen is that more people will be incentivized to open up their own business cause there will be more people who have disposable income and people can be more sure that they will have a successful business model cause there are more people out there that will be able to buy their product.

You know, the large businesses that have tons and tons of employees will barely be affected by this because they are not paying their employees $10 dollar minimum wage anyway, they are paying professional wages. It’s really the small mom and pop businesses that will have the most concerns but also small mom and pop business that have the most to gain from this increase [Background laughter] and it’s also very important to insure that if you are unsuccessful as a small business person that you
have something to fall back onto and that is some sort of a semblance of a livable wage. My mother has always been concerned with my political philosophy. She is more conservative when it comes to fiscal issues but over time I think that some of these arguments have won her over. We know through economic theory when people have more money they’re not just gonna go just store it, they are going to spend it and they are not going to spend it necessarily frivolously they are going to spend it on things that they need. We know that 12 percent of the world’s wealth is stored in off-shore accounts which means that when the ultra-wealthy get a pay increase it is not actually going into the economy so it’s not actually helping to grow the economy. There is a multiplier effect when money goes into the pockets of those who earn the least and so when we put money in the pockets of those who earn the least we have this massive multiplier effect because that money is circulating over and over and over again. That is what we should be trying to accomplish. Now it’s not simply side
economics and it’s not simply demand side economics. I think you need a combination of both. If you don’t have people who have access to capital, and you don’t have people who have access to liquid cash, and you don’t have people who are entrepreneurial and creating new things you won’t have a naturally developing growth in GDP. That is important, we do need that. But on the other side of the token if peoples wages are stagnating year, after year, after year, after year and they are going deeper and deeper into debt that is also not the way to grow GDP. This is not just a matter of moralism it is a matter of how to work in an actually robust economy and making sure that everybody is a part of it. So for those four decades after the 1940s we saw a massive increase in GDP. This is when we were introducing stronger and stronger minimum wage laws and this is when we had top tax brackets that made sure that the ultra-wealthy paid in more so that we were actually investing in ourselves, not just in infrastructure but in ourselves as a people. I cannot speak more
strongly in favor of this minimum wage law. We saw over the past four years the minimum wage increased by 50 cents a year every single year. And people who were against the minimum wage increase will generally say a few things: One, it’s going to cause job loss or it’s going to eliminate entry level positions. Now in the 1940s and 1950s economic theory told us that if you increase the minimum wage [Background conversations] you will de facto have job loss. But that was just economic theory and 80 percent of economists at the time believed that this was economic fact but then after about 30 to 40 years of actual statistical research and met analysis that have been done over time and this is done by looking at state by state comparisons, this is looking at state by municipality comparisons, this is looking at country comparisons. We see that there is actually no aggregate loss of jobs. What may happen is some and business that are on the brink may go out. But what ends up happening again this is in aggregate is that we create so many new jobs because there is so much new demand that it
actually balances out and what ends up happening is we increase the quality of life for a slew of people. Of course it is not great that we’re losing some of these jobs potentially but it you’re talking about what happens in aggregate then the fact that there is no job loss on net should mean that we’re leaning in favor of increase in the minimum wage because of how many people it helps. This isn’t a way for people to get rich. It is not a way for people to get wealthy it is a way for people to literally put food on the table and feel okay about themselves, that they’re not a failure. That they shouldn’t be working 60 or 80 hours a week just to take care of themselves. Through the statistical analysis what we see when the minimum wage increases there is a pooling at the bottom so people who are making less than minimum wage get bumped up to minimum wage and then people who are a little bit higher get paid a little bit more and then eventually what happens over time is that cycles all the way up until you eventually get to the top income earners who won’t see just an income increase
cause they rely much more on capital gains. What we’re doing by changing the minimum wage is we’re actually changing what the value of a dollar is. And this might sound scary but basically everything we do here is effecting what the economy does and doesn’t do. Whether this is working with the stock market or making labor laws changes, everything we do here is saying we need rules for this game to make it a more beautiful game, to make it a fair game to make people want to play and not feel like no matter what they do they can’t get ahead that the cards are stacked against them and this is possible to do but it requires us to be focused and actually diligent in making sure we make these changes and that is why I’m a big proponent of insuring that we index because if we don’t index what essentially happened year after year is we are not only giving people increase just to their wages and their wages aren’t staying the same because of the toll inflation tales year over year, that two percent year over year they are actually losing buying power constantly over time so people rely on us to make
sure the economy keeps on working or else it will completely stagnate because people will not have the money they need to actually pay for the things that they deserve which is basics like food, like transportation, like housing.

In summation I want to say I am so proud of my colleagues for working on this Bill. I’m so proud of my colleagues specifically Robin Porter who has just been phenomenal over the last ten hours fighting for if not just her colleagues here, it’s not just the people back in New Haven and Hamden, it’s not even the people of the State, when we become leaders we give people around us in nearby states the will power to join this fight with us because we cannot do this alone, it’s so much easier to say well the market will correct itself but the fact is if we don’t have champions who are working on these things it doesn’t correct itself. All these changes that we’ve seen in terms of labor laws over the years come from people that say, you know, this isn’t fair, this isn’t right. We need to make changes and not everything we’re going to do is
gonna be perfect and not everything we’re gonna do is going to work exactly like we planned but we can always make changes if we see some deleterious effect and I am so proud of my colleague Robin Porter who has been a champion of this ever since I’ve know her and if we index to inflation and we make sure that year over year people get that raise that they deserve we can go onto other things to make sure that we are protecting people of this State. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I will kick it back to you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Thank you, Representative Elliott. From the 125th District the wonderful Town of New Canaan, Representative O’Dea you have the floor, sir.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I’m hoping with a new pitcher on the mound I might convince more minds to switch their vote. But I think it is kind of ironic with all due respect to my colleague on the other side of the aisle who just spoke from the 88th District it’s all due respect I very much
appreciate your comments. There aren’t two people more opposite on the political spectrum from an economic standpoint and all due respect I completely respect what you had to say, I listened intently and I did appreciate that. I think one of the key things we need to take in this Chamber is humility. And I just want to make sure the good proponent of the Bill, the Chair of Labor had time to stretch her legs so I’ve got a few comments to let her do that.

I do go to daily mass. It’s one of the things I think helps me be a good legislator to listen and be humble and learn. And to my friend from the 88th I would encourage you to listen to your mother more about her conservative views [Laughter] at the dining room table. That was an attempt at humor early in the morning.

I did want to go though a couple of things. Just recently in November of 2018, I’m sorry March of 2018 we got a report, a final report from the Connecticut Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth and what I think a lot of us in this Chamber were on different sides of the aisle
are kind of missing, we are ships in the night. I think I’m hearing through all this debate on the other side of the aisle that we need to increase wages to increase wealth living wage. And on this side of the aisle what we’re trying to say is if you do that we’re gonna lose jobs. Looking at the Commission on Fiscal Stability what is indisputable and it’s a bipartisan commission is that we’ve lost jobs. We actually have less jobs now than we had in 2004. That needs to be repeated, we have less jobs now than we had in 2004. We are the only state with negative GDP over the past ten years and it’s not just a little bit, it’s a lot. We are negative 7.9 percent GDP and over that same time period we are the only state that is negative. The only state, the United States averaged 115 percent GDP growth. Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Taxachusetts, New York, Rhode Island all have positive GDP growth. If we were working with just a $15 dollar minimum wage without the history we’ve had over the course of the last ten years we could think about it. The State of Connecticut has lost
competitiveness. There is no dispute, the Chairman of GE, some would say we’re glad he left, but the Chairman of GE said at a Fairfield County Business Association meeting the reason why they left is because the economic environment in Connecticut is toxic. It’s a bipartisan commission, stated “Our state is toxic to business.” So what I want to try and focus people on, on the other side of the aisle is the fact that we should be looking at every single Bill in this Chamber and whether or not it will increase jobs or decrease the number of jobs. Do we want more people contributing to the bottom line or do we want less? It’s indisputable that Connecticut right now is toxic. We are number 40 for the cost of doing business. We are number 42 for the best states for business. We are number 33 top states for business according to CNBC, FORBES is 42, Moody was 40. The Beacon Hill Institute put us at 43. That does not scream an environment where we should make it more difficult for small business. The report continues, [Gavel] [Gavel] we’ve got a net out migration in the State of
Connecticut. We’ve got jobs that averaged, households average $34,000 dollars being replaced with income of $30,000 less in income. [Background conversations] Our population, the Connecticut population the only way we get out of the hole we’re in is if we increase job growth and increase our population. It is estimated that Connecticut’s population is flat, flat, zero percent growth through 2026. So this report which was bipartisan paints a very bleak picture. So last, I think it was actually wanted for a second to say yesterday, but my good colleague from the 144th District the Chair of Commerce put out a Bill, House Bill 7008 and that Bill was AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO RECRUIT BUSINESSES TO CONNECTICUT. And the good proponent of the Bill in a few moments I may ask a few questions on the business that she heard from encouraging increase of the minimum wage. But very single business that I’ve heard from in my district in New Canaan is opposed to the increase in the minimum wage. House
Bill 7008 which we voted on I think it was mostly unanimous, basically [Background conversations over speaker] asks us to make and advocate the positives about Connecticut for business. It stated on line 17-19, “the commissioner shall consult the business community and the Connecticut Economic Resource Center in the process of developing such marketing strategy.” As we’ve heard CBIA, the North Business Association, every single business association I’ve dealt with and every single business I’ve dealt with has been opposed to minimum wage. That is not taking House Bill 7008 to heart in my humble opinion. Now there has been some discussion about well what are the neighboring states doing. We there is an article in The Telegram dated April 27, 2019 out of Massachusetts and the title of the article for anybody who wants to Google it is Telegram.com, Fewer Jobs For Area Youth Forecast Owing To Minimum Wage Hike. Again, Fewer Jobs For Area Youth Forecast Owing To Minimum Wage Hike, April 27, 2019. There was an owner of a Crystal Cave which has batting cages, miniature golf, ice
cream, they normally hire 20 teens. This year they are hiring 16 maybe 17. They are hiring less. The owner stated if I can’t afford to pay ‘em I really can’t afford to hire them. Another business in Massachusetts reducing their staff at Jimmy John’s Gourmet Sandwich franchise reducing their staff by three to four employees. All attributed to minimum wage according to business owners. The City of Wooster as we’ve heard based on the fiscal note I believe it was, I’m not sure if it was my friend from the 14th who went through the cost on the fiscal note, Wooster, Mass population of 180,000 within 30 so thousand of Bridgeport is seeing an increased cost just for the youth they’ve hired, the teens 18 and older of $220,000 dollars annual increase and as you heard, Bridgeport, Manchester, Torrington all saw significant increases in their costs. According to this article again from The Telegram every single business interviewed said that minimum wage will cost jobs or make business difficult to grow. They are going to reduce their overtime and reduce their hours for their workers.
There was a baseball team, The Wooster Browhards like the Hartford Yard Goats they hire 40 to 45 part-time employees summer and they’ve got about another 30 at concessions. They are going to decrease their staff; they are cutting employees because of the minimum wage. I point this out and I would encourage my colleagues in their leisure time when they are taking a nap later on today, to help them go to sleep, read The Telegram hard facts of lost jobs in Massachusetts because we, because they did what we’re proposing to do. It’s not fake news, those are real facts. [Background conversations] So in the minimum wage because we’re indexing it by year 20. Look I didn’t think I’d make it eight years here, actually I guess I’ve only made I seven so far, but in year 20 the minimum wage we set over $27 dollars. I would submit to you right now and I believe the good proponent of the Bill admitted this and I will confirm it with her in a moment, the minimum wage is not a livable wage. We heard a lot of comments from the others side of the aisle, let’s raise the
$15 dollars, that’s not a livable wage. The testimony I heard was $19.08 was a livable wage, not $15 dollars. So the arguments that are being made to increase minimum wage to $15 dollars so people can live on it is just not accurate, it’s not being honest with where we are today. Now in going through what we’ve done with the minimum wage over time in 1997 the minimum wage was $3.75, in 88 it went up to $4.25, and then over the course of the next 11 years it wasn’t touched until 1999 when it went up to $5.65. In 2000 a year later it went up to $6.15 a year later 2001 $6.40, 02 - $6.70, 03 - $6.90, 04 - $7.10, 06 - $7.40, 07 - $7.65, 09 - $8 dollars, 10 - 8.25, 14 - $8.70, 15 - $9.50, 16 - $9.60 and currently in 2017 $10.10. None of those minimum wage were ever intended to be a livable wage. Again the disconnect between my friends on the other side of the aisle and my colleagues on this side of the aisle. We view the minimum wage jobs as just that, a start or a supplement. The minimum wage jobs are not intended to be livable wage jobs. In any event, as I see people exiting,
I’m not sure I’ve changed any minds. Look there was a question made or a comment made from a friend on the other side of the aisle or a colleague on the other side of the aisle that we need to think about people at the bottom of the pay scale, from the bottom of my heart, I mean this, I am absolutely thinking about the people at the bottom end of the pay scale. I truly, I swear to you I am. We need jobs. We need more jobs and I was joking with the good Majority Leader earlier; you know I’m wrong most of the time, just ask my wife. But I’m telling you as we meet our maker I’m 99 percent certain that we’re gonna lose jobs with enacting this $15 dollar minimum wage. So the question becomes, I believe my good colleague from the 88th said and acknowledged that we are going to lose jobs in the short-term but by raising the wage in the long-term we will catch up. Ladies and gentlemen we’re in the tank and what’s going down worse. We not only clipped the iceberg we’ve run over it and we’re sinking, we’re taking on a lot of water. If you look at the surrounding states okay,
Maine is going to $12 dollar as of January 1, 2020. Connecticut is, if this Bill passes, Connecticut will be $12.00 in September of 2020. Massachusetts $12.75 in 2020 and $15 dollars in 2023, same as Connecticut. The difference is those states have positive GDP. Those states have positive population growth. Those states have positive job growth. Same with Rhode Island but Rhode Island is at $10.50. New York $11.10 going up to $12.50 as of 12/31/20. New York has a lower minimum wage that what we are proposing. Now I would ask the good proponent of the Bill to ready herself if the Speaker would allow me to ask a few questions?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now on lines 51-52, Mr. Speaker it is my understanding, what has been articulated is we are limiting learners and beginners definition as defined by Connecticut Regs 31-6-07 and 31-62-dd6 we are limiting those and only
allowing a lower than minimum wage for those under 18 as I understand it. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Mr. Speaker would you please have the good gentleman repeat the question, please.

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative O’Dea would you care to?

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Absolutely in trying to speed up things I tend to slow them down, as a trial lawyer I do that regularly and I apologize. All I am trying to do is confirm, I know you’ve been answering question for many, many hours I’m gonna try not to make a quiz her for you today at this late hour or early hour. But basically lines 51 and 52 what we’ve done in this Bill is we’ve eliminated the learners and beginners definition set forth in the Connecticut Regs and limited the lower wage exception to only
those individuals under the age of 18. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

That is correct, Mr. Speaker. If you are 18 or over there is no learners or beginners wages. If you are 16 or 17 there is an 85 percent training wage for duration of 90 days.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative O’Dea.

REP. O’DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And as an attorney as some of us in this building are, I generally I like to take out the Statue books and look at the history of our statutes and we had put in the learners and beginners definition through Regs and through statutes back in 1963 and I’m wondering.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
If the good proponent of the Bill, I was not involved, I wasn’t in the Committee, I’m not on the Committee but I’m wondering if during any of the meetings or discussions in drafting this Bill the definitions of learners and beginners was discussed and how it started in 1963 and why, I’m wondering if that was ever discussed at the reasons for eliminating it now, like overtime how things evolved and why does the good proponent believe we no longer need that as opposed from 1963 until present this legislative body had believed learners and beginners was a good definition and worthwhile to have in the State if that question makes sense, if not I apologize I can rephrase?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To the first part of that question, no it was not discussed about how it originated, why it originated and to the second part of that question
my good friend I already answered that question, it is on the record.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative O’Dea.

REP. O’DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and yes you have what I wanted to point out in my humble opinion is I believe this body, this robust body of very differing opinions got it right from 63 to today. Having, limiting the minimum wage exception only to those under 18 I believe is a huge mistake. I believe this body had kept in the definition, created learners and beginners for those over 18 for the express purpose of giving our 18 year-olds, 19 year-old, 20-year olds, 21 year-olds an opportunity to work for less than minimum wage. The Federal Government did it, we’ve done it since 1963 and we were right when we did it. My good friend, Representative, I forget who it was that said it, I don’t know if it was Representative Ferraro or actually Representative Rutigliano was talking about
the impact on his business and Representative Candelora talking about how his small business was gonna be decimated by this minimum wage. Right now, current law allows business to hire beginners and learners, apprentice who is 19, 20 years old at less than minimum wage and businesses like to do that. They are encouraged to do that because they save money in hiring and they get experience. What Massachusetts has seen and many other states have seen is that when you have a minimum wage and no exception for those 18, 19, 20 those 18, 19, 20 aren’t gonna get hired. And they are not gonna get the experience and Representative Rutigliano who’s given that experience as a chef, given an opportunity, never would have gotten that opportunity under, if this law was in existence at the time. He wouldn’t be the success he is now. The learners and beginners exception is needed in this legislation. We were talking about, and I know Representative Candelora had said this when he first started and I again my Catholic guilt I feel bad having you listen to me at this point in time, this
is the worse Bill in my humble opinion as someone who is trying to create jobs in the State of Connecticut, it’s the only way we’re gonna get out of this ditch. The reason why I’m standing up here and talking about this is because in my being as much as my good friends on the other side of the aisle are positive this is a good Bill I’m positive it’s not. I truly believe this is going to be devastating to the State of Connecticut. Jobs are going to decrease; we are going to have less revenues on the income taxes. So Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an Amendment. It is LCO No. 8280. I respectfully as the Clerk call the Amendment and I be allowed to summarize.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8280 which shall be designated House Amendment Schedule “I”.

CLERK:

LCO No. 8280 designated House Amendment Schedule “I” and offered by Representatives Klarides, Candelora, etal.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative O’Dea has the floor.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker the Amendment before you basically all it does is puts in the trainer, learners and beginners. It is learners and beginners language is left in on lines 51 and under the current law it’s 200 hours in which you are allowed to have these learners and beginners. The new law changed that to 90 days. And current law allow you, if an employee works 100 hours at one job and leaves and goes to another employer, he only has another 100 hours. So there is no reset once you leave your job. This Amendment allows a reset so once, if you work for one employer for 80 days, and you go to a new employer there aren’t just 10 days left, there are actually a new 90 days that you can work for under minimum wage. So essentially all this Bill does is maintain current law with regard to the learners and beginners so allowing people above the age of 17, so 18, 19, 20, 21 and up to be learners and beginners for 90 days as opposed to the hours and it allows an
employer reset if you change jobs. So, Mr. Speaker I move adoption.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Question before the Chamber is adoption House "I". Will you remark further?

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

I would ask that when the vote is taken it be taken by role as well, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Without objection when the vote is taken it shall be taken by role. Seeing no objection, so ordered. Further on House "I".

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

I never get a chance to answer questions.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

If not. [Tapping] Representative Porter on House "I". Representative Porter. We need a mic on. Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And with all due respect to my good friend on the other side of the aisle, I am gonna have to
disagree with you on this Amendment and ask my colleagues to please support me in voting no. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

I forgot to ask it was a friendly Amendment, I guess it was.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Further on House “I”? If not Staff and guests please return to the Well of the House. Members take your seats; the machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Have all members voted? Please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked.

Will the Clerk please take a tally and
would the Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

LCO 8280 as Amended by House “I”

Total Number Voting 134
Necessary for Adoption 68
Those voting Yea 54
Those voting Nay 80
Absent not voting 16

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):


REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Sorry, Mr. Speaker I thought I still had the floor for further comment on the Bill. If not, I will pass the baton. No, Mr. Speaker it’s okay, I’ll let my colleagues speak and I appreciate the time and attention. I see that I didn’t change any minds and maybe in the future. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Thank you, you can always catch up with us later. Love to hear from you. All right moving on, we will go to the former President of the Barnum Square Toastmasters Club, from the 108th District, Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Mr. Speaker, thank you for acknowledging that. I was a toast speaker at one time and I look forward to speaking today finally on this Bill I waited quite a number or hours.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Quite apropos Mr. Barnum was a member of this Body as you know.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

The good Chair of the Labor Committee knows how I feel about this Bill. We’ve had several discussion in Committee and outside the Committee. I do not intend to engage in a back and forth questionnaire, Representative we’ve done that. The Chamber has heard enough questions, I believe but you know what, I was interested earlier, well I guess it was around ten o’clock last night, I was interested when I
heard some, I saw a group hug, I saw a group hug and I saw and I heard a bunch of cheering from my colleagues across the aisle. And I wasn’t quite sure at that time what it was all about and then I obviously came to learn that it was a cheer and a group hug because this particular Bill was comin out last night and it made me wonder whether we will hear those same cheers as the business start leaving Connecticut. And it makes me wonder if we will hear those same cheers as our workers begin to get laid-off. And it makes me wonder if you will be cheering when you find out that in the month of March for the first quarter of this year we’ve lost 3,400 jobs. I wonder if you will be cheering when you consider that we’ve only recovered 80 percent of the jobs we lost starting with the 2008-2010 recession. Are we cheering that we are the only state in New England not to recover from the job loss? Are we cheering that the unemployment rate? [Gavel]

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Could we confine our comments to the Bill as amended?
REP. SMITH (108TH):

I’m pretty sure Mr. Speaker these comments directly relate to this Bill because this Bill impacts the entire State of Connecticut and this Bill is put in a further nail in the coffin to our small businesses. Everything I stated so far relates to the underlying Bill, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Except the part about the proponents cheering among themselves, so keep it to the Bill as amended I would appreciate it. Thank you.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Well, I’ll tell ‘ya, I was offended last night about ten o’clock Mr. Speaker when I heard cheering in our gallery that this Bill was being brought out. So maybe it’s just I’ve been up a little late and we all have but I was offended then, I’m offended now. I understand there’s policies that my colleagues wish to bring forth, I appreciate that. I respect that actually. We have differences how we think we should get there, that’s what it’s all about. No problem but to have the cheering and the mocking
that was a little offensive to me. So I’ll move on Mr. Speaker. [Jeering] I felt the cheering was a mock, yes. I did.

You think about what we’ve done over the past ten years, I’ve been here since 2011 I guess is my first term. We’ve lost Aetna, we’ve lost GE to other states, and Mr. Speaker the cost of doing business in Connecticut is 9.7 percent higher than anyone else in the country. Almost 10 percent. Now think about that, the cost of doing business is 9.7 percent higher and I believe this Bill, Mr. Speaker will increase that percentage. Connecticut has received a grade of “F” from CNBC for the cost of doing business in Connecticut. The Small Business Policy Index of 2019 said our business policies including the cost of minimum wage and that is even before this Bill are the reasons why we’re doing so poorly in our rankings throughout the country. One of my colleagues earlier, and I don’t remember if was today or last night talked about the housing and how this Bill would affect our housing crisis that we haven’t recovered from. Right now we’re at a
three year low for housing in terms of sales. People continue to leave the State of Connecticut, Mr. Speaker because of the policies that come out of this particular Committee and I’ve expressed my views to Representative Porter and the Committee about that in the past, it’s nothing new. I found this particular study interesting. Now millennials are our future, 20 to 30-year-olds. So millennials right now, Mr. Speaker, Connecticut ranks 50 the in the country, dead last, for millennials living with their parents. It was kind of odd to read that. I wanted to make sure I was reading it properly so I read the article and the reason we’re dead last is because our millennials and I know many of them, because I have children of that age, and that age group they cannot afford to go out and buy a house, they cannot afford to get out and get an apartment because the jobs are so scarce and the jobs are so scarce because we have businesses leaving the State of Connecticut, like Aetna, like GE, like the mom and pops. You know, I’ve heard over the years, Mr. Speaker people have approached me, Connecticut is so
bad we’re gonna leave but it was sporadic. It wasn’t every time I ran into somebody but I honestly must say this year, when I run into folks in town, and I know other people have said this so it’s nothing new, they say we’re out of here. We’re leaving. God that’s hurtful. It’s hurtful I’m sure to you, it’s hurtful to me. I’m sure nobody in this Chamber wants people to leave. I’m sure, this in their minds the best interest for the State of Connecticut. But sometimes, Mr. Speaker we have to look at the facts. Now the good Rep from the 88th gave us an economic lesson earlier. I appreciated that. I’m not an economist, I don’t know. I’m not the first one that should be telling you about how to run the economy. But what I do now is that since I’ve been here the polices that have been put in place by this legislature in this Labor Committee have not worked. They have not worked. Now why am I saying that, Mr. Speaker? It is not my opinion, you just look at the stats, you just look at the studies, you look at the rankings, it hasn’t worked. We raised minimum wage I guess it came out six years
ago, 2014, it doesn’t seem like six years ago, it
seems like a little less, maybe it was five.
Nonetheless we raised it but that did not spur the
economy. It didn’t help create more jobs. I know
Rep Porter believes in her mind that people put more
money in their paycheck they are goin to spend that
and go to the store and that will spur the economy.
I understand that rationale but it hasn’t worked.
So why do we continue to go down the road of a path
that doesn’t work. That is what, so when you hear
some anger today, this morning, that is why, Mr.
Speaker I feel a little angst this morning beyond
bein ornery and tired but that is what is really
causing this angst this morning. It’s because we as
a group are not doing what we should be doing to
help Connecticut. Honestly I think we have to look
at ourselves in the mirror, Mr. Speaker realize what
we have done, realize what we’ve done hasn’t worked,
ask ourselves how we can turn the corner and when
will that be? When will we actually turn the corner
here in Connecticut? We’ve all been patient and the
people of the State of Connecticut have been patient
and they are waiting, waiting for us enact policies that will turn the table, turn the tide. You look at Massachusetts there over 600 percent in jobs gained. We still haven’t recovered. Mr. Speaker, we will change the tide here in Connecticut when we start changing the policies and I hope we do it today by voting this down. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Thank you, Representative Smith. Further on the Bill as amended? Representative McGee of the 5th District. You do not wish to have the floor, Representative? House will stand-at-ease.

Representative Camillo of the 151st, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CAMILLO (151ST):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. In my 11 years up here we’ve done a lot of great things together on this side of the aisle and our friends across the aisle and my biggest frustration has been how this legislature has reacted to the great recession and the decision we’ve made and unfortunately Bills like this at times like this, don’t help it. We heard
all night long from people who have small businesses, I had a small business but since I’ve been up here I do business tours every year and one of the things I ask the people in my district is about the minimum wage because it’s always coming back and with the exception of two out of probably a couple dozen it hurts them. As we’ve heard from Representative DeMello if you are a small business in Connecticut, you have to compete with larger businesses who can absorb this cost. That is why the bigger companies are for it, raising it at this rate and at this time. So if that small deli owner or diner owner or restaurant has to keep up with this, they really can’t raise their prices cause they’re gonna lose out to the bigger business. We see that all the time and we’ve been begged, begged by constituents in our districts, I get emails and calls weekly on this begging us not to do this at this time with all the mandates coming down. And I firmly believe this, being in opposition to this is not being antiworker at all. In fact this is just as much for the workers as it is for the small
businesses, and the towns and the nonprofits because what happens is when these small businesses are seeing their profit margins decrease these are the job creators and when they are seeing their margins decrease what are they gonna do, they’re gonna decrease hours for the workers or they are gonna lay them off. That is the last thing we want or we need. Again we are next to last and have been for a decade yet we continue to do, to put bills forward like this. It almost gets embarrassing, Mr. Speaker, it really is. We go back and we sound like broken records. I’ve heard arguments back and forth. I heard Representative de la Cruz this morning and I agreed with him when he said that this is the way things are going with automation. We can’t stop that but a Bill like this, increasing the minimum wage as we read Representative D’Amelio say is makes it easier for them to go that decision for automation and decrease jobs. So some have taken to social media in the last few hours and talked in this Building and talked about a filibuster. I don’t think it’s a filibuster to stand up for small
business. I don’t think it’s a filibuster to stand up for workers. I don’t think it’s a filibuster to stand up for our town and I don’t think it is a filibuster to stand up for nonprofits. And if we pass this and go around patting ourselves on the back and we continue to look at what we’ve been looking at for the last eight years, nine years then we have no one to blame but ourselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Thank you, Representative Camillo. From the Brass City, Representative Cummings of the 74th, you have the floor, madam.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker a question.

Through you.

To the proponent of the Bill.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Please proceed, madam.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
I am looking at lines 29 through 34 which indicate that on January 1, 2024 and not later than each January first thereafter, the minimum fair wage shall be adjusted by the percentage and it carries on. Does this indicate that the minimum wage can be adjusted more than once a year?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Cummings.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So just to confirm the only time that the minimum wage can be adjusted each year is on that October 15th date that is set forth on line 26?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Cummings.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you.

If the index does drop does that require an automatic drop in the minimum wage if the minimum wage has reached over that $15 dollars an hour bare minimum?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Can you please have her ask the question again?

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Cummings would you care to?

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
If the index does drop, will the minimum wage follow suit and automatically be reduced so long as it does not reduce past the $15 dollars?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To my understanding it will not decrease if it drops.

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Cummings.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So the only time following the index is when there is an increase, is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
For the last time on this question, that is correct.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Cummings.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do appreciate her generosity in answering my first questions of the day and on line 58 through 67 it indicates that after two consecutive quarters of negative growth there is reporting to be made to the General Assembly about reducing the minimum wage. Must the General Assembly take up those recommendations?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter do you care to respond?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Yes.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Would she please repeat the question?

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative Cummings, do you care to repeat your question?

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

I sure would, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

On lines 58 through 67 it sets forth a process by which if there are two consecutive quarters of negative growth, there is reporting that goes through to the General Assembly to take action on the recommendations. Must the General Assembly take actions on those recommendations or will they be automatically implemented without any action taken by the General Assembly?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I can’t count the number of times that I’ve answered that question last night, this mornin. It is on the record.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative Cummings.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If she wouldn’t mind putting on the record one more time so that I can make sure that I understand the answer to the question I have proposed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter, do you care to respond further?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do mind.

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Cummings you have the floor.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am definitely disappointed that the proponent of the Bill refuses to answer my question when this is my first time speaking on this Bill after being here all night long. This Bill directly impacts our
small businesses. I have spoken to small businesses in my community wherein the $15 dollar an hour is going to cost them $234,000 dollars a year upon implementation and to simply refuse to answer the question because she no longer feels like it is rude and a slap in the face in our communities who are employing these people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

You’re welcome. Representative Case of the 63rd you have the floor.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Good morning, sir.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

A few comments and then a few questions to the proponent of the Bill. We talked earlier, I think it was maybe yesterday, regarding special needs and the subprime wage rate.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

A question to the proponent of the Bill.
Will this Bill affect the wages or the jobs of the what we call the IDD community in this Building?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
No.
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Does the good Chairwoman of the Labor Committee understand and know how, I shouldn’t say no how, can she explain to me how a wage is earned under the Federal Exemption for minimum wage?
Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):
Through you, Mr. Speaker.
Could you ask the good gentleman to please
inform me of what line in the Bill he is referring to?

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Mr. Speaker I am reiterating, talking about what was said earlier in this conversation by the good Representative. I think I’ll just explain myself because it is a very complicated process for the subminimum. There is a subminimum wage were people can do the 14 (c) and apply to the Federal Government for the exemption. But for our ARCs and people who get paid and get reimbursed by the State of Connecticut majority of them are forced to use the prevailing wage route. There are two routes spelled out in the Federal Government WHD document and speaking with one of the ARCs this morning, I think it was this morning, yes. They need to take and call three competitive employers and get their prevailing wage rate and average those three together and that is where they start their subprime
minimum. For an example today, that subprime minimum is around $11 dollars an hour if you went out to three different companies in the northwest corner and then you work off of that your percentage. So, Mr. Speaker if you, if this raises to $15 dollars an hour we will see the prevailing wage increase therefore if the prevailing wage increases those three companies that get called they are going to have a much higher rate that they are going to be expected the ARC or whoever to pay those employees. This one particular ARC that I spoke with this morning is being currently audited and they are being audited on did they go out and do their three investigations with three companies and what the prevailing rate. The bottom line is $15 dollars an hour for the IDD community is not only going to have an impact on losing jobs because companies aren’t going to be able to afford the calculation that rises to $15 dollars an hour at the prevailing wage rate and then you take your percentage off for the subprime. And I would agree that if we went off the subprime at the Federal
minimum wage which an employer can apply for that would be a different story because it would be around $7 dollars - $7.60 an hour and we would go off of that. But in speaking to the ARC today I was really looking for the information so I could backup my good colleague Representative Kokoruda on how she was trying to explain this earlier. So what I was told is not only losing jobs because $15 dollars an hour will raise the prevailing wage but it will also make it those jobs much more competitive. So by being much more competitive who do we feel is gonna get those jobs? Is it going to be ourIDD population or are they gonna move somebody within the company that is skilled?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

By not having jobs this is going to cost the State of Connecticut because the ARC and others feel as though more people are gonna be put into day programs because there is not gonna be jobs out there for this community. It is so important for this community to have work, to have things to do. It is not about the money, that is why they are
subprime and the federal government is looking to phase this out in six years so we’re just gonna have a minimum wage. So there is not gonna be any choice of people making subprime minimum wage once they decide and the bills go through and it phases out within six years. I am very concerned about that. It is very difficult right now at $10.10. The good Representative said that July first one of the minimum wage, one of the increments happens July first which is her birthday. I like $10.10 because it’s my birthday so it’s easy to remember.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

A couple of clarifications to the good proponent of the Bill a couple of clarifications and I know it has been a long day and morning and I’ll let the good Chairwoman who has done a great job but I.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

This morning or yesterday it was spoken around 12:30 a.m. that CBIA was okay with $15 dollars an hour. Did any Representative from or has CBIA mentioned that they are okay with minimum wage of
$15 dollars an hour?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It was members of CBIA not CBIA or the lobbyist
for CBIA if that is what is being insinuated.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will go back to that
and look at that and I was not speaking of a
lobbyist but thank you. Mr. Speaker so earlier on
it was also said that or is it correct that there
were no nonprofits that spoke in favor of $15
dollars an hour?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Were there nonprofits that spoke at the Public
Hearing in favor of $15 dollars an hour

Through you, Mr. Speaker.
ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I have spoken to nonprofits in favor of this.

I did not say it was at the Public Hearing.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case

REP. CASE (63RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Would the good Chairman be able to tell us what type of nonprofits were in favor of this?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter were you able to hear the question?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I was not.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

I didn’t think so. Representative Case would
you care to re-ask your question so to speak?

REP. CASE (63RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Would the good Chairwoman be able to acknowledge any nonprofits that she spoke with that were in favor of $15 dollars an hour?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not feel that is an appropriate question and I will not answer.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Okay. Well thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So through you, Mr. Speaker.

Last year we had the opportunity for PCAs to do a contract $14.75 an hour. That contract stays $14.75 I believe until 2021 do the other people within that building they will be making the $15 dollars an hour such as the people answering the
phones, the janitorial.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Will they be making the $15 dollars an hour?

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter. Representative Porter do you have your request button lit?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Would you pleas have him repeat the question?

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Of course. Representative Case would you mind repeating the question?

REP. CASE (63RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So we’re talking about the PCA contract we did last year of $14.75. That $14.75 I believe that contract is a three year contract so the other people within the building where the PCAs are they
would be moved to the $15 dollar and the PCAs would remain at $14.75 is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That would be somethin that was collectively bargained and I was not at the table. I could not speak to that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Basically so the contract is $14.75 that has been acknowledged but the other workers within the building who aren’t PCAs will move to the $15 dollars an hour that was my question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.
REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Could he please clarify what other PCAs is he referrin to?

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m not speaking the PCAs because they already have a contract. I am talking about other people within the building, people answering the phones, custodial work, other things that happen within the building not just PCA, so other people in the building would be making the $15 dollars an hour.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

When there is a contract for the other employees that has been bargained at $14.65, just looking for clarification.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter is that clear enough yet,
or perhaps not?

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If I understand if the minimum wage is applicable to them now then it will continue to be applicable.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We’ll move on. So when we were in Appropriations on I believe Tuesday, I asked a question, I said I was told I would get more of an answer back. I have not received it yet. Could the good Representative tell me, so when we move to $15 dollars an hour it moves quite a percentage of people over the federal poverty level which is what we based our benefits on. How many people in the State of Connecticut that are on benefits would be losing the benefits?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

OFA has not given us an analysis on that, that is why the good Representative has not received a response.

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Mr. Speaker and then there are a few other questions I have but that is one of the main reasons why I can’t support this today. We have so many questions that can’t get answered. We were told in Appropriations on Tuesday that the answers would be worked on and that this was a work in progress but it is here the next day after we were in Appropriations so we haven’t had time to get those answers. Mr. Speaker, this is very concerning to a multitude of things and I will let the good lady sit down and thank you very much to the good Chairwoman.

As many people have spoken, I’m not gonna
reiterate, were going down a very slippery slope. My concern is as it always has been, my biggest concern is the IDD population. Learning about the prevailing wage component of the Federal subprime really compounds this and concerns me because it is going to affect not, really concerned, dollar figure but it affects lives. The IDD population, we help them get jobs, we get them jobs because it is a life for them. It is a way of getting out and socializing and being with people. It is not about making the dollar. I mean there are concerns that moving the prevailing wage up is also going to put more money into the pockets of the special needs people so when they reach and they go for their quarterlies and they find out they are above their $1600 threshold that they can have in assets they need to do even more spenddowns and the people don’t realize what spenddowns are a special needs, their Personal Title XIX has more than $1600 dollars in their pocket or in assets they need to go out and spend the money whether it is going out to dinner, whether it is buying a new TV so this new minimum
wage of $15 dollars an hour which we are having a very difficult time not only Tuesday in Appropriations but here today being able to get answers, if we have such a bill on the table that is going to affect so many people in the State of Connecticut we should be able to have the answers, we shouldn’t be handed a Bill a half hour before we actually debate this with changes this affects way too many people. And once we see the amount of people with IDD who we all are involved with the IDD caucus, we come to Family Day, we say yes, we’re gonna do everything we can to take care of you, you got our word, we’re gonna do everything and now we’re gonna put ‘em out of work. We’re gonna make it so it’s gonna be harder to get a job but you know what, the bottom line right now is we can’t get the answers to anything in this Bill, we’ve asked questions is Appropriations, we’ve said we’re gonna get answers, we don’t have ‘em. Mr. Speaker I cannot support this today for that one simple reason. Thank you, sir.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Thank you, Representative Case. Representative France of the 42nd you have the floor, sir.

REP. FRANCE (42ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few comments on the Bill.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Please proceed.

REP. FRANCE (42ND):

I’ve been listening carefully to the debate that has been going on for approximately 12 hours and we’ve listened to questions and inquiries about various aspects of our economy in Connecticut, nonprofits, farmers, small businesses, young workers, the IDD community, which was recently reiterated, apprenticeship programs, technology, tourism. We’ve asked the potential impact of this Bill on each of those communities and the disappointment that I had in the responses was there was effectively no look at the impact. And so we’re gonna enact a policy that substantially caused an impact across the economy and yet we have not looked at that impact. There is no research to document
the positive or negative impact and we’re expected as legislators to set this policy and the questions that are even asked as just recently reiterated on Tuesday in Appropriations that haven’t been presented and yet you’re asking this body to enact or pass, vote on this Bill. It is just disappointing that we are at that point and I harken back a lot of the fine Representatives talked about different businesses in their districts and I have one business that is very symptomatic of the economy in this State and this Bill, if passed, will shut them down. This is a little Subway in my district. Now five years ago that Subway, when I met the owners, they had the husband, the wife running the business and 10 to 12 employees generally two employees per shift and over time that is reduced. Now the wife is out working a second job and they have generally only one employee if any hired. And recently I had a conversation with Paul and asked him if minimum wage was passed what the impact on his business would be and he said he would have to close. And the reason is, you think about this, his
store is open approximately 100 hours a week. His entire labor budget for all the employees that he has is only 50 hours a week which means he is there running his business which as a business owner he does. But you compare where he was five years ago, five years ago 10 to 12 employees, two employees per shift. Now he is down to one or none. And if we pass this law that store will close. That is symptomatic of our small businesses in this State who will be substantially negatively impacted by this minimum wage that we have already heard today has no basis in fact or research on where that number came from. And we heard talk through the debate about the Fight for Fifteen and then we heard about minimum wage, it became a living wage and now we have fair wage in the debate and I harken back 10-11 hours ago when the good Ranking Member of Appropriations was standing up and talking about the negative economic indicators of our State and the response that was received from the proponent was essentially that that is why we need to raise minimum wage because as we raise the minimum wage
that will promote low economic growth. And I look at that and I think the two states that were indicated were Massachusetts and California with Massachusetts at $12 dollars going to $15 dollars an hour. As I thought about that if raising the minimum wage is the driver for economic growth then why stop at $15 dollars. We should immediately raise the minimum wage to $100 dollars an hour and we would see economic growth that we have not seen in the world ever if that is in fact true. And I would argue that is purely theory and conjecture. There is no basis or research for that assertion. And then that brought me back to my beginnings in education, engineering and science and going back to ninth grade science where we learned the difference between theory and law. You see a law, how do you get to a law, you start with a theory and you put that theory to practice and you gather data and you analyze that data to validate the theory and over time you have validated the theory with enough specificity and enough conviction that it now becomes a law because it has been repeatable. And I
would argue that is not what we have here today. We’ve all heard of the Law of Thermodynamics as we went through science but the increase in minimum wage is a direct indicator of economic growth or prospective economic growth is purely a theory and I would argue is a flawed theory and mere conjecture. I would hesitate to even say it has theoretical value and I was mindful of economics and thinking that we all need to have a lesson in economics because we are ignoring one law and in fact is a law, called the Law of Supply and Demand and anytime you increase the cost of a particular product or service relative to the economy you get less of it. We’ve seen that in various tax polices throughout our country and our State’s history. Anytime that you increase the rate of taxation on a particular good or service, you will project a return on that increase and invariably we receive less of it. Why? Because people choose not to pay more for that product or service because of the increased taxation. And this whole theory versus law was reminded me of a debate or a question a couple of
years ago from a former OPM secretary it’s kind of an example of the flawed theory when you don’t put research and data behind it and it was really dealing with a question related to the recent opening of the rail line between New Haven and Springfield and the rationale was given by the former OPM secretary was sort of a build it and they will come mentality. If we put this rail line in it will generate ridership, just like Metro North created the Gold Coast and when I heard that I had to chuckle because we forget our history. The Gold Coast was not created by Metro North, we didn’t put Metro North in, expand Metro North and all of a sudden the people flocked out of New York City because this grand transportation system was built so they could come back in the city, no it was because New York City was a disaster in the 70s and people were looking to escape the city and they came to Fairfield County and set up home. Metro North had to expand to bring them back into the city, that is the supply of ridership creating a demand and the Metro North being spent to bring them back into the
city. That is how the Law of Supply and Demand works. It is not build a system and pray and hope that after we subsidize it beyond the capacity of the State to support ridership will magically appear. And this is no different. We’ve seen over time and we’ve heard regionally that other states in our region and across the country raising minimum wage except for one thing that is different in every other state but ours, they have all recovered from the recession of over a decade ago, our State has not. And why is that? And a practical sense we did things exactly the opposite of the other 49 states. The other 49 states did things that promoted economic growth. They lowered taxation, they reduced regulation, they gave opportunity for businesses to grow which is how economic growth happens, not by increasing a wage rate because the return to government on any increase in wage is at most seven percent. Why is that? Well that is because that is the highest tax rate we have on income and I would argue that any increase in wages does not go to, is not taxed fully, one. It is not
spend on things that are taxed even at the 6.35 percent sales tax rate so the return is something less than that so for every dollar of increase we get less than a six percent return. That is not a sustainable policy to expect. And as I look at that what did we do over the last decade that caused us to lag behind, not just across the country but even our neighbors in New England. We increased taxes which is the exact opposite of what you do if you want to stimulate economic growth. Everywhere we see states that have recovered and we say economic growth. You are lowering the cost of doing business and one of those things is taxation and we did exactly the opposite so there is no surprise that we have continued to lose jobs, it is no surprise that our economy has continued to lag and now we are going to effectively throw people overboard and stand here with a deadweight in our hands and hope they can tread water and this is taking everything, not even counting the other things that will have a negative impact on our economy. One proposal paid family medical leave, it enacted under the
legislative plan will be like taking the deadweight and throwing it overboard and watching our citizens sink below the grey water. This is flawed policy with no basis in fact or research. And it is irresponsible of this legislature to vote in favor or it when we asked and got no answers on anything looking at the various factors of our economy and how this $15 dollar minimum wage increase will impact us. I urge my colleagues to reconsider where we are headed as a state and vote against this increase in minimum wage that is irresponsible given the economy that we have in our State. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Thank you. Representative France in the backrow. Representative McCarty of the 38th, you have the floor, madam.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

Thank you and good morning, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Good morning, ma’am.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):
Thank you. I would like to make a few remarks and then perhaps a question to the good Chairwoman of the Labor Committee. But I will begin by saying tonight we heard some very persuasive arguments and very cogent arguments about the raise in the minimum wage would do to some of our most important industries including the nonprofits and the variety. But I rise because I really want to speak about the impact that raising the minimum wage could have on our nursing homes and our home healthcare agencies and this is the impact that I believe the negative impact that raising the wages could have is one of the major reasons why I won’t be able to support raising the minimum wage. And let me explain, so we have approximately 221 nursing homes in this State that really service over 25,000 of our senior population, are aging population. We also have a homecare industry that services over 800,000 Medicaid residents, that 800,000 thousand with a variety of different service. We’ve spoken tonight about the 325,000 individuals that are not earning minimum wage and my heart does truly go out to them
and the best of all possible worlds we would be raising the minimum wage where everyone would be earing a good wage to have a good quality of life. We all care about the quality of life in this room. However we have not, I am going to repeat this more than once, we have not raised the Medicaid reimbursement rate for our nursing home nor have we done that for our home healthcare agencies so they have been flat funded for over a decade and I am being told by both industries that a rise in the minimum wage will do great harm unless we look at that Medicaid reimbursement rate and since I’ve been in the legislature we have not had any movement in that regard, so I am very worried that by raising the minimum wage without that additional funding that we are going to be putting many of our agencies out of business. Now they’ve said they are working with over 50 percent of the population as I just said are Medicaid and this is their lifeline for reimbursement so without the looking at that I ask the question, the rhetorical question how can we raise the minimum wage. We will be in essence
hurting those same people that we are trying to help currently. With the aging population as I said, if the homecare agencies cannot thrive those individuals will go back to nursing homes at a much higher cost or into hospital emergency rooms so this is a serious matter that we have to take a composite look at the whole picture as we go forward and really find a way, a solution, that we can protect those individuals that need the protection. So I think it is important to point out that there are some very valid reasons why we can’t support or why I can’t support this raise of the minimum wage at this time. I would love to be able to. I wish that we could have had the conversation about how this would be impacting these industries prior to being here tonight and if we had a little more time to do that, I think we would have a better result. So with that if I may just direct one question to the good Chairlady from the Labor Committee?

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Please proceed, Madam.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):
Thank you and first I do want to recognize your stamina and thank you and thank you for answering my very quick question. Did the Labor Committee have an opportunity to talk to our home healthcare agencies and to our nursing homes about this impact that would occur to them without looking at the Medicaid reimbursement rate?

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

To the gentlelady we did have an opportunity to speak with them.

Through you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative McCarty.

REP. MC CARTY (38TH):

And if I may go back to the good Chairlady if you could tell me what the response was, were the homecare agencies in favor of raising the minimum wage and the nursing homes? Thank you.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):
Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

They did express that there would be challenges to them being able to handle minimum wage increase and we did listen and we took that into consideration.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Representative McCarty.

REP. MCCARTY (38TH):

Well thank you for that response but this is the major reason why I will not be able to support. As I said I’ve worked for many years with Social Services agency, I dedicated a lot of time to trying to erase poverty in the State of Connecticut. I think that is something that we all would like to have as a goal so everyone has a good quality of life and a good living but it is impossible to raise the minimum wage without giving serious consideration to how it is going to impact our home healthcare agencies and our nursing homes. We would
have a loss of jobs, lay-offs, cutbacks. We’re currently trying to keep our CNAs, keep the staffing levels there and I just can’t understand how these industries are gonna survive without the help they need and if we look at the fiscal climate and the challenges that the State has been facing the moneys just haven’t been there to get the Medicaid reimbursement rate in line. So I would hope going forward the State would find a way to really look at these industries they need an increase but I don’t know how we’re gonna do it if we don’t come together, have a process, have a plan and sees these things out in advance. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Thank you, Representative McCarty. Moving up the row or two from Fairfield that wonderful town on the coast, Representative Kupchick you have the floor, madam.

REP. KUPCHICK (132ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize there is a lot of high level frustration in the room today,
this morning after a long debate and I know there is frustration on that side of the aisle because we are fighting for something we believe in and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are passionate in fighting for something that you believe in. But what I am most frustrated about is that last session we worked so much more bipartisan. We passed a budget that we all voted on together which I thought was so historic and I thought it set a precedent going forward that we would be working like that in the future. And it is not so much for me that I don’t support increasing the minimum wage it’s that we weren’t working together on it. And I think that’s really part of the root of the problem with what is happening in Connecticut is that no one is working together, no one is sitting down and negotiating. When this Bill passed out of Appropriations people were saying there was going to be more work to be done but to my knowledge on this side of the aisle was invited in on any of those conversations. I have co-owned a small business with my husband for over 30 years so I think I can
speak with some level of authority as a small business owner. I have had a business council since 2011 with a variety of small business owners who shared real frustration about how the State of Connecticut treats them, not just minimum wage, workman’s comp, taxes, regulations I mean honestly it is mind boggling sometimes and you wonder why people even get up in the morning and work so hard for such a small level of profit. They do because this is their home state. They care about running a business and providing jobs for people. I worry more so; I think that if we had the six year phase in there may have been some buy-in on this side of the aisle but that conversation didn’t happen and it should have happened. We are all supposed to be fighting like our Speaker has said in the past for Team Connecticut not as Democrats or Republicans but as people who care very much about the future of this State. We all should care about it and it shouldn’t be partisan. I worry about a lack of jobs; I honestly seriously worry that people will lay-off people because of this. I spoke to four of
my business owners over the last 24 hours and they said we see this is coming, we know it is going to pass and we will simply cut the hours of the people who work for us because our profits are so slim.

This is a small deli in my town. Another is a pizza guy. They don’t make really a lot of money and they simply can’t cut their profits any tighter than they are. They have mortgages to pay as well, they have kids to feed too and they are responsible for providing jobs for people. So I respect the good Chairwoman of the Labor Committee and her passion for this issue, I do. I just wish that maybe in the future we can start working a little bit more bipartisanly for the good of the State of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Thank you, Representative Kupchick.

Representative Dauphinais of the 44th, you have the floor.

REP. DAUPHINAIS (44TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few comments to make.
ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO (82ND):

Please proceed.

REP. DAUPHINAIS (44TH):

Like the rest of this room, I have been here all day for the last 12-1/2 hours listening to the debate. I just wanted to share my background here and what I know of how good Connecticut was and could be and where we are at now. I came here to Connecticut in 1970. My dad was in the Navy and my mom was a stay-at-home mom and we came here, he was stationed at Quonset Point Rhode Island and he bought a chicken farm so we were lower middleclass family, three children. My dad retired from the Navy and he decided to open up a business. He opened up a tractor business and I can remember still the day that business opened there was only I think three tractors in that showroom and they put everything that they had on the line for that business. So I grew up watching that business and how they struggled to get that started. I grew up knowing the work ethic that we had to do. I had many, many jobs. We worked on an egg farm, I worked
at a greenhouse, I did a lot of babysitting and I too was a waitress for many, many years trying to earn some money to support myself when I was young, buy my own car, or buy my own clothes and then later supporting my family when I had children to supplement the income that my husband was making at the time and he was in the military and then to better myself I went to school so I was both working, going to school and taking care of four children and my husband and I worked very, very hard to make that meet and never once, never once did I expect the government to mandate anybody I worked for to give me more money, never once. I worked hard and continued and pressed on to be where I am today. I remember the days when the economy was really, really good in Connecticut. You could literally get up in the morning, work a job, quit your job and get another job later that day, that’s how many jobs were available. The economy was robust and things were doing very, very well and then we had income tax that came in. We had mandates and regulations and more taxes and I’ve
watched the State and the economy go down, and down and more and more people leaving. When my parents opened up their business it was to make a living, it wasn’t to provide jobs but they were fortunate enough to do well with their business and the outcome was they were able to provide a few jobs and as they grew they were able to provide a few more jobs but they still have that business today. My father is no longer here, my mother runs it with my brother, my 85-year-old mother still does the bookwork and they are a very modest business but I can tell you that every single cost and regulation that is pushed down on them from this State is making it harder and harder and harder for them to stay open. So what happens when we force wages to go up? People look at what they have because they obviously are doing it to make an income and so they look at how can they make up that cost so they either drive those costs up and it goes on to the consumer or they sometimes look at things like cutting back hours, laying people off, making choices to perhaps close and I’ve heard of other
entrepreneurs who have thought about opening a business who were saying I would never open a business in Connecticut.

I think, you know, I hear over and over again that many people are saying businesses aren’t going to be affected and they can absorb this cost but that is not what I am hearing. I have a family who has a business, I go to many, many Chamber of Commerce meetings and I have had many, many emails and calls from business who are saying this is going to destroy them or cause them to lay people off or not be able to hire more people. I don’t think it is our job to put people out of work. That is not our role as legislators. And I have been really disappointed today to watch everyone in this room and their inability to compromise and work together across the aisle. I heard over and over again in Aprops different Committee meetings we promise we will work with you. We’ll make this better. We had nine amendments I think today and not one, not one time was there compromise, not one. And I will close with this, we all say we are fighting for the
elderly; they are the most vulnerable in our State and we want to do what we can to help them but I am going to tell you that they are probably going to be the ones most affected with this wage increase.

Their wages aren’t going up. They are on fixed incomes, struggling to buy food, pay their taxes, perhaps get somebody in to help them and buy their medications. We hear all the time they don’t have enough money for that so while all the costs go up around them, their income is staying the same. So I am imploring you to think about them and I thank my good friend, Representative Case talked about the disabled as well. Our most vulnerable individuals in this State are going to be impacted the most by this in a very bad way. I will not be supporting this Bill today and I urge all of you to join me to come across the aisle and work together for some compromises that we can all agree on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Madam. Chamber will stand-at-ease. [Gavel]
Chamber will come back to Order. [Gavel] Are there any announcements or introductions? Representative Porter, you have the floor, madam.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate you allowin me this opportunity to introduce to this Chamber my Godson, Brian Smart who is here with his freshman call from Amistad High School in New Haven, Connecticut and I would ask that we all give him a warm welcome and his class is on the way down [Applause]. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Representative it is good to see you here today and you’ve been here a while waiting so we’re glad we could greet you.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Before we return to the debate on the floor are there any other announcements or introductions. Representative Yaccarino of the 87th, sir you now have the floor. Ladies and gentlemen if we could
just give Representative Yaccarino our attention please.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I lost a mentor to me, Mr. Nazario this week. He came here from Puerto Rico in 1950, joined the United States Marine Corps. He fought for this Country in Korea during the coldest time in the war. I am saddened because I missed his funeral but it’s part of the job but the man was truly a man of honor, integrity, somebody though I had a great father, I looked up to him with all respect and we need more people like that in this world. So I want to really honor Mr. Nazario [Crying]. I’m sorry.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Don’t be sorry, Representative please proceed at your pace.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

He was really a true American hero, a true patriot but really a true human being who gave so much to people, never told people how to live their life, listened to people and was just such a good example. So I just want to give a moment of silence
to Miquel.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

If we please stand and offer a moment of silence to a Veteran and a true friend. [Gavel] Thank you very much, Representative.

And now back to the calendar. Representative O’Neill of the 69th District, sir you have the floor.

REP. O'NEILL (69TH):

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We’ve had a very, very long debate here and I guess I will not try to prolong it too much but there are a couple of consequences that I don’t believe have been really mentioned much. I have to confess I haven’t been in the Chamber for every minute of the debate but one of the consequences of raising the minimum wage is that there are some jobs that are relatively easy to replace with technology. We are all familiar with a robot vacuum cleaners that can go up and down the halls of an office or a home or any other type of buildings. They have robot lawnmowers now and one of the things I have to say is that for someone who
for example comes out of prison and is having a hard
time or needs to get started with a job, very
frequently doing landscaping and lawncare and these
are typically minimum wage type jobs they don’t
require licensing, they generally don’t require the
kind of background check that would get someone’s
prison record or arrest record brought up but it is
a job you can get, that you can start to reestablish
yourself with but those, that is the kind of work
that can also be replaced now with these robot
lawnmowers and there are going to be more and more
improvements in technology with the high tech that
we have so that thing we have are relatively simple
that are relatively repetitive that don’t require
high skills, high education or the ability to pass a
background check increasingly its gonna be possible
to make the jump to a type of technology that will,
in equipment that will take over doing those kinds
of jobs so that far from an individual being able to
get an extra dollar or two, or three what is going
to happen, I think, on this evolving technology is
that you reach a tipping point and I think we are
there, we may have already actually been there for a while where it makes more sense to buy equipment that does the work. I’m sure we all saw and I think I viewed it as a novelty, maybe to be viewed by many people as a novelty when a major grocery store chain started to introduce robots in the grocery stores. But I am sure eventually we are going to see a lot more of that kind of thing going on even in places where retailing is to be done. And so every time we increase the cost of hiring people because the minimum wage is a cost to the employer but it gets multiplied, it gets multiplied by the amount of money the employer has to contribute to Social Security, worker compensation, all of those things are driven by the level of compensation that the employee gets. The employee may only see the $15 dollars the next two or three years, $13, $12 and so on, but eventually when it hits $15 dollars the employee will only see $15 dollars if he still has the job but the employer will see a lot more in cost because that is just the base figure on to which has to be added all the other expenses associated with
having an employee. When you buy a robot, when you invest in some technology, we’ve seen it is some of the fast food places as well, you don’t pay unemployment compensation, you don’t pay worker compensation, you don’t pay health insurance for robots, you don’t have to worry about pilferage, you don’t have to worry about one of your robots sexually harassing one of your other robots and then you have a problem perhaps with CHRO, if you didn’t establish proper policies so that there would be a sexual harassment complaint process. None of those things apply to technology which makes the technology more and more attractive to take the kinds of jobs that people who are ready to take a minimum wage job would normally get. And I don’t know and I hope I’m not repeating something that has been said before but as I have been listening to the debate I don’t believe I’ve heard much in the way of reference to that consequence of constantly raising the minimum wage. So I really do believe that far from helping the people that are below the bottom rung of the, the first rung of the ladder of
economic success, raising the minimum wage in this way may very well have the affect of eliminating that rung and making the ladder of success completely out of reach for the very people who need it the most, the people without an education, whose parents did not have an education, whose parents did not have a business that they could pass along to them or bring the young person into that business, etc. those people who don’t have any of those birth advantages going in are gonna find it harder and harder to get their hands on the first rung of the ladder because raising the minimum wage is gonna just make it that much less likely that someone is going to want to hire somebody instead of buying a piece of technology that will do the job and perhaps even do it better because of the way the equipment works.

Second thing, been a lot of talk about the economic consequences of the minimum wage and people may wonder why we have spent 12 hours on the Bill, 24 hours in the session that, the Bill is part of because the economic report that I’ve read have
indicated that the impact of the minimum wage is not that gigantic. It does make a difference, obviously the people that get the increase and keep their job get a better paycheck and it does reduce jobs or at least it has historically been able to cause a reduction in jobs and employment according to the economic analysis that I have read. There are a couple of contrary studies that came out in the last five or six years doing a two county comparison one on one side of a river that is a state line and the other on the side of the river, one of them has a minimum wage increase the other doesn’t and they compare the number of jobs created and loss assuming that the economy is the same because they are in the same geographical territory but whatever the impact it has generally not been cosmic but it clearly does have an impact on the economy. Connecticut may be a case study and as far as I know, no one has actually gathered statistics for Connecticut in that we increased our minimum wage particularly the last time there was an increase substantially, immediately jumped to the $10.10 number that was put
forward at the national level which I did not pass in the Congress when it was proposed but we adopted it and since we adopted that wage increase which was phased in over a number of years and really just was fully implemented a couple of years ago, we have seen and I know this was mentioned but we have seen not just zero economic growth but shrinkage of our economy so whatever impact the minimum wage might have it is not going to stimulate our economy and create a better economic situation for the people of State of Connecticut. We have already conducted that experiment. We’ve used as guinea pigs the people of the State of Connecticut to test whether raising the minimum wage to the highest in the nation would produce economic growth and economic success, it did not. Now it’s true that minimum wage came around the same time that big tax increases were imposed and clearly we all understand that they have a breaking affect on an economy or at least most of us do but the minimum wage as an economic panacea as the solution to anybody’s real problems probably not. Is it going to be disaster,
is very business in the State of Connecticut that has minimum wage jobs gonna have to close it’s door, will grass grown in the streets of Connecticut because only of the minimum wage? Probably not. But it’s a marginal affect, it’s one more thing for people to look at, it’s a signal and a symbol and to the extent that we are sending a message to the people across this country as well as to the people in the State of Connecticut as to where the State of Connecticut is headed, what our policy direction is, raising the minimum wage at this point in time by this amount of money in this rapid a way, is sending a very bad signal from an economic standpoint and I would urge you, not that it’s gonna happen, but I would urge you to really think long and hard about doing this.

The third thing I would like to mention is the provision in this Bill which is new is that the minimum wage will then be indexed if it goes through and we will never have another one of these debates in all likelihood. The increases in the minimum wage will occur automatically and there won’t be any
change that will require legislative activity. Now in one sense, in one sense that is going to harm the proponents of the Bill, I think, because I think one of the consequences of this debate is it mobilized and rallies a collection of groups that are politically supportive of doing this and the people who advocate for it become heroes to those groups. And as much as anything else I suspect that is one of the reasons why this keeps happening this way. There won’t be this debate, there won’t be this rallying point. It will just happen automatically and no one will ever notice again, at least it won’t be politically noticeable to have this storm and strife, Battle Royale on the floor of the House that keeps us here all day and all night for a day or a day-and-a-half while we debate this Bill. This will never happen again; this is the last one of these and the political benefits that result from having this debate will never happen again either. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark
further on the Bill as Amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Zupkus of the 89th, you have the floor, madam.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I rise for a couple of comments but I do have a couple of questions.

Through you, please.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter please prepare yourself. Representative Zupkus please proceed madam.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. When I first heard about this Bill coming out I started talking to places in my district and actually wherever I went I talked to nonprofits, I talked to companies, small businesses, tourist places and as we’ve heard today there have been real concerns and for the nonprofit a lot of the positions that we’re talking about are gym monitors, classroom aids, swim instructors, parking attendants, front desk people. And some of these nonprofits for this going into effect will
make they, they will have to pay more than $650,000 dollars, that is a huge impact on them. And as I talked to some companies, some small businesses, a grocery store in my town, the ice cream shop, Big Dipper who I’m sure if you’re from my area you’ve been there, it’s very popular and they are not gonna be able to keep the people that they have. The grocery store said to me, Leslie I can’t keep hiring kids, I’m gonna have to pay just the people that I have, the ladies that work there. I can’t hire kids that are from our town anymore because they can’t afford to plus with the paid FMLA and all the other taxes. So I went to Dunkin Donuts which I frequent often and I was talkin to the gentleman there and he said to me, you know, one of the problems that I really have is I have two employees and one is a Rockstar, they all the time, goes the extra mile, wants to move ahead and I have another one that comes in late, calls out but I need ‘em because I need the help and he says I cannot promote the person that really needs to be promoted because I can’t afford to because I have to pay them the same
amount of money. So when I go through this Bill and I’m looking at, I talked to people who haven’t had raises in years and I look in lines 8 through 15 and the next few lines and it talks about the increases over the years, the average is just probably about 45 percent and when I did the math on minimum wage, 40 hour week, 52 weeks in a year, the increases come to eight percent. I don’t know anyone that gets eight percent now a days, you just can’t afford it. I would love eight percent and I think everybody would love eight percent. But it is just not sustainable. So a question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If I may to the proponent of the Bill?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please proceed

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

I know we’ve talked about 90 days, but what I did not hear and please forgive me, good Chairwoman if you’ve said this before, my daughter for example works at the local grocery store for the summer and she doesn’t hit the 90 days and she goes back to
school or college, coming home this summer and she will start working there again. How does that 90 days, is it from when she started last summer and she worked 45 days and she comes back and it is day 46 through 90 or does it reset?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to my understanding to the good Representative if she did not fully work the 90 days, then it will count towards 90 days when she returns, if this is the same establishment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So she would come work 45 days the next year would start at 46?

Through you.

Is that the understanding?
SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my last question is in line 151 of the Bill and it talks about that if you replace a worker for a younger worker who is 16 and then it says, the reduced rate for employees for a period of time specified in the regulations adopted. How long is that suspension?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That would be determined by the Labor Commissioner as he sets the regs for this language.

Through you.
SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And so that would be enforced by the Labor Commissioner and he would determine if it is a year, a month whatever he decided that you are going to be, I’ll say fined or penalized for it.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I’ll just end with some comments. You know, I printed out actually a bunch of emails that I’d gotten and just some of the comments, In Bethany I have a farm and Clover Nook Farms and he says, “it’s a tremendous negative
impact on my business. I have nine to twelve seasonal help. I won’t be able to hire them.” They are unskilled laborers and he needs to hire them but this happening he will not be able to hire the people that we needs to run his farm. Another constituent wrote that if they have to pay the $15 dollar minimum wage that they are not going to hire another person and they will hire somebody at a lower wage or two people that can do the same job as one. I have a ton here and most of them say, I have to reduce jobs, charge more for my products or reduce my work staff. So Mr. Speaker, I don’t see how this creates jobs in anyway. I look at it as a lot of my colleagues as an entry level position. A friend of mine, best friend, started minimum wage with me, I went to college, I moved on, she is now a single mom, two kids, started at minimum wage and now she is the manger of a huge grocery store so has done very well for her and it has ignited her as somebody mentioned on that first rung so I will not be supporting this Bill for all those reasons and for my constituents that have reached out to me.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

    Thank you very much, madam. With your indulgence again to the Chamber, we’re gonna stand-at-ease. [Gavel].

   [Gavel] Chamber will come back to Order. Are there any announcements or introductions? Representative Blumenthal of the 147th, please proceed, sir.

REP. BLUMENTHAL (147TH):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for the purpose of an introduction.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

    Please proceed, sir.

REP. BLUMENTHAL (147TH):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Here we have with us today, three finalists for the E-Smart Essay Award on Environmental Conservation and Energy Efficiency. They come from Middlesex Middle School in Darian. They are Lila Deveneau, [Phonetic] Jack Pebbler and Mae Gallagher and along with Representative Wood I would like you all to give them a very warm
welcome. [Applause]

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Wood I just don’t think it is appropriate to have just one person sing their praises so Madam, you now have the floor.

REP. WOOD (141ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for the indulgence. I know it has been a long night and I will definitely keep this brief you know that’s my style. Again, Congratulations to Jack, Lila and Mae, it’s a tremendous honor and you guys worked hard and go get ‘em. And to their moms and dads who brought them up today and grandmother, thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

One last round of applause for ‘em please [Applause].

We will now return to the Bill. Representative Gibson of the 15th, sir you now have the floor.

REP. GIBSON (15TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good morning, sir.
REP. GIBSON (15TH):

How are you today?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

I’m hangin in and you?

REP. GIBSON (15TH):

Outstanding, sir. Sir I rise this morning in support of House Bill 5004 and I also rise in support of the Labor Chair, my colleague Representative Porter. Mr. Speaker, today we are talking about something that is going to benefit the citizens of the State of Connecticut and I’m gonna tell you three reasons why we should support this Bill. So first, this is just the first step in a couple of things that we as the legislature need to do to support the people of the State. It’s just the first puzzle, piece of the puzzle. In the short-run I’ve heard colleagues argue that this may lose jobs, it may hurt people but your Honor, your Speaker, I will say that in the long-run this is like medicine. It’s actually gonna help. We’ve done this before, the minimum wage has been increased, things have not fallen apart. Actually things have
gotten better. So this is something we really need to do. I’ve also heard about losing jobs and animation well I bring this to your attention, animation is already here. STEM is already here; STEAM is already here. What we need to do is instead of being afraid of these things embrace these things that are happening and we need to counter that by investing in the people that will actually benefit from more education. A higher wage means that don’t look at it as a job loss, look at it as people being able to go to college, you can educate people, we already have a shortage of manufacturing jobs. These people now instead of being afraid of losing these jobs to animation, it’s a robot, they will now produce animation. They will now produce robots; they will control these things and we will have a better working population. So all those arguments about losing jobs will go out the window because we have to be progressive and move this State forward. I also heard about the argument of summer and seasonal employees. Let’s be real. We all take our kids to amusement parks
and we all benefit from the excitement of it but every year amusement park rates, parking rates go up and up and up. But yet the pay of the seasonal workers stay the same. How is that possible? How is that fair. What’s fair is to raise the rate of what these people are making to be in accordance with what these amusement parks are making, and what these seasonal workers are doing. So that argument is out the window. And I will also speak to this point, I represent a district whereas my constituents have come here from different countries or from the south and they look for a better way of life, they work so hard to get some of the things that others have been able to afford. They work so hard and they deserve a chance to live the American dream. They buy houses, they move from project housing to real houses and these are the same people that are struggling, the people that we swore to protect and so I argue, is the argument that we’re worrying about businesses who are going, leaving the State because businesses, let’s be very real, they will stay, they will come back but we need what
businesses really need is an educated workforce. A workforce that can help out with new animation. We need to help out the people who are moving into the State instead of keeping them down. And so I argue that a lot of things are said today are actually counterproductive to the oath that we took to move this State forward, to help our citizens and to make a better way of life for them. So I will stand in support of this House Bill and I will stand in support of my colleague, Representative Porter. Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Buckbee of the 67th District. Sir, you now have the floor.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How are you this morning?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

I’m doin well, sir and you?

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):
I’m doing all right. You look quite rested, sir. [Laughter].

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Don’t let appearances fool ya.

REP. BUCKBEE (67TH):

I think appearances is part of what I’d like to talk about. A couple of comments to make about the Bill itself and one overall comment about the last 24 hours in this Chamber.

First things, first. I am not going to rehash every single thing we talked about with this Bill over the last 12 hours in this room. It appears to me at this point regardless of compromise where everyone has made up their mind and I understand that and that’s how this works. I will say I have one problem with the last 12 hours here but I’ll get to that. My concern I have with the Bill is [Sighs] is the lack of preparation. There’s a lot of questions that aren’t answered that we don’t know. And we owe that to our constituents, to the people of this State. We owe to it to them with such a big decision to make we can’t go I with economic theory
but practical application. That is our responsibility. If we do not prepare to go into this with everything there we’re letting them down, that is our job. So as far as I’m concerned it’s, we’re gonna disagree on the bill is and that’s okay. Disagreeing is disagreeing but I think when it comes to something this important it is so important for us have the answers, to be ready and not to be halfway there as we go in. Preparation is everything.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker I think something needs to be reminded although we’ve all been up for quite a while, we’ve all been tired and in a building and running around for the last 24 hours. Attitude has become somewhat of a concern here and that mutual respect needs to be maintained between each and everyone of us because that’s what binds us together. Again the people of this State deserve that. We can and we must to better as individuals in how we talk and treat each other. Look, I’m not the quarterback of any team, but when you’re offensive tackle sees a problem, feels the need to
step-in and say something, he will. I’m just a guy on the team and I think our attitudes need to be addressed. Something for all of us to consider while we’re here for a long time together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the time.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill as Amended? Representative Phipps of the 100th District, sir. You now have the floor.

REP. PHIPPS (100TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in enthusiastic support for this Bill. After many hours of, 13 hours of debate, I felt compelled to speak. I tend not to but in this particular case I don’t know how we can remain silent after 13 hours of discussion and I am incredibly concerned that we have a system that’s designed and propped up through exploitation. And I’ll talk about exploitation in a moment but I first want to tell a little bit about my own story. I grew up in Woodbury Circle, a small apartment complex in the south end of Woodbury of Middletown,
raised by a single mother. So I’m incredibly used to seeing women of color and specifically black women rise above and try to take care of those that need a little bit of extra help. So to see a fellow sister today take on 13 hours of debate and really leading the charge to make sure that we can protect ourselves and feed our families and keep one another healthy, I just want to rise in support for Robin cause it’s that sort of action that reminds me of my mother which is why I serve to this very day. And when I think about why this Bill is so important, why is raising wages so important I recognize that hope and love is a very powerful driver. That’s the sort of driver that will have you go to work and essentially in many ways in a dead end job where you’re working 40, 50, 60, 80 hours like my mom did in order to do things like put clothes on my back and put food on the table or send me to school. And when you only have hope and love to drive you because you know the wages you make are not enough, it’s time for a fundamental change. It’s time for a fundamental change. And each day that we have
workers that make the minimum wage and once again this is incredibly important work. We often minimize the work that they’re doing and what is the work that they’re doing. They are CNAs that are taking care of our sick, they are the ones that are serving our food, giving us hot meals and making sure that it is safe and well prepared and it tastes good. These are the folks that are taking care of our elderly, folks that have given so much to our communities each and every day just by the sheer sharing of their wisdom. Those are the folks that are making minimum wage that we’re asking for their wages to be increased just a little bit, just a little bit. They are the ones that keep our hospitals and our hotels clean to make sure we are all disease free. These are the folks that we minimize that work each and every day which is why I ask why is this not now, why is it not one year later, not two years later, not four years later, four and a half years later, we are finally saying that the folks that once again serve our food, keep our children safe, keep our elderly safe why are we
not asking for their wages to be risen right now. We have to wait four and a half years. And we have to go and make sure that after 13-1/2 hours of debate we finally are goin to see these wages rise. I’m askin ‘ya to join on me and join with me and join for the workers, I said that are doing much needed work, work that we need to value in a much more concrete way. I want to speak, cause I’m new, right? I think I just stopped counting how many days I’ve been up here, probably somewhere around 128 days, I think it’s 129 days today but I counted each and every day because to be frank I was surprised that someone like me could be up here. Someone that came from fairly humble means and was often times the only one like me in the spaces that I went through each and every day. But one thing during that journey that I recognize was that sometimes you just have to do something different and in this Chamber we talk, there is this propensity for saying that if it couldn’t be great, if it couldn’t be perfect there was no need for change. And I will say this, that extra dollar per
year is a difference between a new refrigerator, it’s a difference between being able to not put gas on a credit card, it’s a difference to make sure you actually can make, the snow tires, the oil change so that the car can last one extra week or one extra month that dollar is incredibly, incredibly important. So I mean so as someone that strangely was endorsed by CBIA and one of things that they said was we know we are not gonna agree on everything and they said that we know how hard you want to Fight for Fifteen and to be frank I want to fight for twenty five because our neighbors, as you all pointed out, that $15 dollars is not nearly enough for a livable wage, it should be probably somewhere around $19 dollars. So I would ask, if we can’t make a livable wage can we at least make it a little bit closer to what it actually takes to live in Connecticut? I just want to, just one last thing, I want us to really value the American Dream that with hard work, with dedication, with commitment we can take that one extra step be able not only to better for ourselves but be able to
leave our children something that is better than the experience that we had. And it is going to take these small little steps like increasing the minimum wage to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Walker.

REP. WALKER (93RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. I don’t know where to being because there has been so much said. To all of my colleagues here, first I want to thank Representative Porter and all of the people that surrounded her to support her in this process. Doing something that is so hard but so needed is important and Representative Porter has demonstrated how much passion we all can have for this great State. There has been a lot of conversation today that has really disturbed me in more ways than I can begin to tell you. We’ve talked today about so many things. We’ve talked about civility, and we talked about compassion, and we talked about understanding
and feeling for each other and being respectful and all of that. But when you listen to all of the things that we talked about in these last 14 hours, I guess, close to, you wouldn’t get that same picture. I’ve heard cultural insensitivity beyond what I think we should ever have in this Chamber. When we talk about those people, or we talk about people should be grateful, or when we talk about the fact that there is only one group of people that need to be maintained and uplifted in this State we are separating all of the things that we should have to make a perfect State. I heard today that many people had been, had no opportunity to talk about 5004 but let’s be honest now. When a Bill comes out it is up to you to follow that Bill. If it is important to you, there is nobody there that is gonna say, hey I’ve got a bill here do you want to come and talk to me. No. When we have public hearings and we have Committee meetings we vote out a Bill. Do we tell people they cannot come to us and talk to us about those issue? Never. We embrace that. But when we come in here and say we
never had a chance to talk about it, we’ve never been part of the conversation it really hangs heavy in my heart. We have had multiple Bills happen in this great hall and when people wanted to share their ideas because they were passionate they found us because we never had any separation. When we passed out the Bill 5004 February 21st out of Labor we had all of that time, if we were concerned about that, to come to the people, the proponents of that Bill and talk to them. So I could ask my good colleague, Representative Porter a few questions about the underlying Bill that we have here and I could point out the fact that the Bill that came out of Labor is not the same Bill. The fact that we did compromise in many things that many of us did not want to has not even come out in this conversation. It seems like it’s all one sided, it is cloak and dagger and off in the corner. I want Connecticut to know that nobody lives in this Chamber in an isolation or away from each, themselves. One person cannot pass a Bill, one person cannot articulate the issues of it because we all represent a different
community but that was never shared today. What was shared today was Connecticut is going down the toilet. My State, our State is not going to go down the toilet because if we take our oath seriously and I mean seriously we will stand and talk and share, bullying people that is not it. Shaming them that’s not it either. Talking to each other that’s it.

You don’t know what my world is like obviously and I discovered that so much today that it is painful. So many people misrepresent other peoples beliefs and thoughts and I’m not trying to say it’s one sided either. We all have those problems but the only way we’re gonna get farther along is by talking to each other and not pointing the finger at each other and saying you’re wrong, and you’re wrong, and you’re wrong. It is compromise. And this Bill was a compromise. Whether people want to acknowledge it or not it was a compromise. I heard that part of the problem is everything has to be perfect, when we roll things out of here it has to be studied, it has to be magnified, it has to be dissected and then we roll it out. I’m gonna remind you about MSP. When
we were doing out bipartisan budget, when some of us said do not cut MSP because it is going to harm the seniors in here who are so dependent upon Medicare and Medicaid because they don’t have enough money and it wasn’t until after the fact when we did talk, we then realized we had to make changes. All of us in here are learning. I told everybody about the Chamber, this is the greatest university I’ve ever been in. My graduate degrees have nothing to what I’m doin here. It is the fact that I am helping, not only people in my district but people around the State of Connecticut because Connecticut is a great State and we are not goin to let these people just roll out of here without trying to protect the State that we all love and represent. When we talked about the minimum wage and we talked about, I don’t think people understood what we were asking. When we talked about how much it cost to live in this State, I’ve heard people say that this, that we have to do this for the nursing homes and we have to do this for DDS and we’re gonna all, we’re gonna be paying for tolls. These are all things that I
didn’t know weren’t something we all had to represent. Five [Clears throat], excuse me. Fifteen dollars an hour gives somebody for 35 hour work week approximately $525 dollars a week which is also approximately $2,100 dollars a month. When we talk about, just a second. When we talk about what it costs to live in this State I wish all of you would just look up Alice. Go to Alice and find out what we are talking about when we say families are struggling. I wish we could have kept that homicide group and the other kids up there today just to hear about this. They need to understand that they can make it because we are going to give them opportunities. On a $15 dollar minimum wage we’re talking about people that are going to earn no more than $2,000 dollars a month. But let me just give you a walk through of what that is going to take. It's gonna take them $1,000 dollars for housing, $200 dollars for food, $300 dollars for transportation, healthcare maybe $200 dollars. Any type of things of technology or anything that they need to survive in this world because technology is
the only way we can survive that is going to be another $100 dollars. We haven’t talked about, you know, electricity or any of those other things. And that purse is $2,400 dollars. Remember I told you they only made $2,100 dollars a year, I mean a month. So they are in the negative. We all know about that because trust me budgeting, we all know about being in the negative, $300 dollars negative just for that one month. Multiply it by the whole year, they can’t survive. Our families need to have a chance. I have more mothers in my district that I know of that are doing two and three jobs and the reason why I know a lot of these mothers is because of the fact that I have had to help their children because the mothers are out working two and three jobs. They are not neglecting their children they just want their children to have a roof and they are makin $10 dollars an hour and they can’t make it on that. It’s just amazing to me that it doesn’t hurt you in your heart. The fact that these people that we talk about, these people, they’re our families, they’re our children, they’re our cousins, our
aunts, uncles and everything else and we want them to have the best of everything. I stood here for the longest time and when I saw the kids up there and when I saw the parents up there I said they need to know that in this great place we are all fighting for them, for minimum wage so they can have an opportunity. I heard about the fact that many kids when they come home for the summer they have a hard time and they are gonna be deprived of certain salaries in their summertime job and everything I have kids in my neighborhood and in my schools and in the detention centers who don’t even have a job. They struggle for a job and we want them to grow and develop and thrive and we can’t do that. So, Mr. Speaker I stand as my colleague said for the 332,000 people in the State of Connecticut, they may not be in my district but I love them none the same and I want them to survive and thrive. I beg of you when we walk away from this today, I really want us to understand, let’s go take a bus ride in my district. Let’s go take a bus ride in Middletown or New Britton or Meriden and let’s get to know our
neighbors. We all understand small business is a major factor in our society for us to live and thrive but the only thing we have forgotten are the people that do the jobs when they get those salaries. That’s what small business is. It is not negating the fact that we have people that need to have a job it is understanding job and education. Mr. Speaker I thank you for indulging me this but I had to say something because the pain in what I heard today was just so amazing, shoot today, for the last several hours, we can do this my friends because I’ve seen compassion come between us but I haven’t seen us understand it outside of this Chamber and that is the missing link for all of us. We’ve got to step outside the Chamber with each other and understand that. Mr. Speaker, it was back in 2014 that I just saw a mirror image of what happened today. I looked at the voting record for the last minimum wage bill and it is going to look exactly like billboard when we vote this Bill and that is the sad part. It hasn’t changed. There was no bipartisanship I hate to tell ya minimum wage for
some reason is something that many people just
totally walk away from because it is almost like
we’re violating them. We are not violating them we
are violating our families if we don’t change.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Will you remark
further on the Bill as Amended? Representative
Dubitsky of the 47th District for the second time.
Thank you, Representative. Representative Hall of
the 7th District.

REP. HALL (7TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening, good
morning and soon to be good afternoon to you sir. I
rise for a question for the proponent of the Bill as
amended and then a comment.

They say the mother is the first teacher of the
child and I want to thank Representative Porter
because we learned today. I represent the 7th
District of Hartford and in fact this great Chamber
that we are in right now is in my district and as
vice-chair of the Labor and Public Employees
Committee it is fitting that this great debate is happening in my district.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

To the great chair of the Labor and Public Employees Committee do you have any data on how many workers in my district may be benefitted by increase in the minimum wage?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Porter.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

There will be 4,330 workers in your district that will benefit from this Bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Hall.

REP. HALL (7TH):

That is such a great number and I appreciate that information, Representative Porter. As a teacher for about 12 years at Weaver High School in Hartford, our school is comprised of about 95 free and reduced lunch. I saw firsthand the struggles of my students and their families. This gradual
increase in the minimum wage has a potential to change the trajectory of the working families that I represent. So on behalf of my constituents, the working families in my district I want to thank my colleagues who showed the courage necessary to give 332,000 Connecticut workers and especially the 4,330 workers in my district a raise. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Bill before us? Representative McGee of the 5th District. Sir, you now have the floor.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And good mornin. I stand in full support of this Bill and I would also like to thank Representative Robin Porter for her persistence and her grit to stand some 13 plus hours to discuss this matter as well as our colleagues in this Chamber. I think it is important to realize the historical foundation for what we are doing here last night and this morning. Martin Luther King Day as we know is often commemorated with a surface
level recognition for his dreams of equality between races. But I would like to remind this Chamber that while communities of color have realized some gains in education and ending segregation as well as an increasing political power the dream of economic equality has remained elusive for black and Latino communities all of this time. Almost 56 years since the March on Washington For Jobs And Freedom which was the original name of the history 1963 march and we are still unfortunately debating the priority of economic equality. So just prior to Martin Luther King’s death he spoke out quite a bit on economic inequality and here is why I am speaking out this morning. And I’ll just read off a couple statistics, 42 percent of workers in the U.S. make less than $15 dollars an hour and people of color are over represented in this particular group. More than half of African-American workers are paid less than $15 dollars, close to 60 percent of Latino workers make less than $15 dollars an hour. There are six industries of high concentrations of workers making under $15 dollars an hour and people of color
are disproportionately concentrated in these frontline occupations and they are food services, drinking places including fast food, retail, homecare, auto manufacturing, childcare, hotel and motel accommodations. African-American and Latino workers make up 400 or excuse me, 47.6 percent of fast food frontline workers and 39.3 percent of food service in drinking frontline workers. In automobile manufacturing 36.2 percent are African-American or Latino. Of the more than 800,000, 800,000 childcare workers in the U.S. over 30 percent of the frontline workers are African-American and Latino. And I could rattle on more statistics, excuse me, but what most people forget about the I have a dream speech is that Dr. King also spoke about and I quote, “The fierce urgency of now, and how now is not the time to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism.” Fifty years after his assignation we are in a similar moment and there is compelling economic arguments to the social justice goal, reducing occupational barriers for women and blacks in the later half of the 20th
Century and we know that was a major contributor to
U.S. economy, economic growth during that period. I
lastly want to remind everyone in this room that
people of color will be the majority of American
working class by 2032. The success of populations
of color will not only serve as an important social
justice goal it will be a major driver of our
country’s economic wellbeing. We simply are
reaching a point where we cannot afford to maintain
income equality, ah, inequality. And so if
American, Connecticut is going to thrive
economically we must take a bold step, a bold
political step now and take action. So.

Mr. Speaker, through you.

I urge adoption of this Bill.

Thank you, so much.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark
further? Representative Candelora of the 86th
District, sir you have the floor.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I will be brief. I
just needed to respond to a couple of comments that was just made. I want to first just state that this document was not a compromise between Republicans and Democrats, this was a compromise between Democrats and while I agree with the good Representative from New Haven that conversation is always good in this building I don’t think we did a good job this time around having that conversation. But I do think this side of the aisle expressed concerns with this Bill because we don’t believe this Bill is gonna accomplish the goals that I think everybody in this Chamber wants to achieve. But the one thing I will say is I make no assumptions of what is in the heart of anybody in this Chamber and while sometimes throughout the course of a night we can be clumsy in our words I don’t question the integrity of anybody’s comments or decision makings and I don’t believe it is appropriate to do so in this Chamber. Frankly my heart breaks for the State of Connecticut with his piece of legislation not because I think it’s giving people money that they don’t deserve but I’m just concerned that this is
going to detrimentally going to impact an already 
strained economy. And maybe if we had a 
conversation we could have worked together to get 
somewhere and get it to a better place. And I think 
when I talked about the gun legislation that we 
worked on in unison, when we had conversation we’re 
better off but when we’re shouting and we’re 
picketing and we have buttons in our faces it is not 
the way to start the conversation. You know, we 
heard comments about the Medicaid Savings Plan and 
when that budget process was going about 
Representative Ziobron at the time on this side of 
the aisle raised the same alarm that Representative 
Walker raised and I think it was this Chamber that 
knew we were in big trouble making that cut and it 
was done. But I will say both side went into that 
with eyes wide opened. Why? Because we had that 
conversation. And so why I am very sad of the 
outcome of this vote today I hope in the end that 
time will judge that I am wrong in my vote. I’m 
afraid it won’t. But I hope moving forward we do 
continue to have conversation because regardless of
the outcome for the State of Connecticut and the impact this Bill may have I think we failed in this process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Representative Klarides of the 114th, madam you have the floor.

REP. Klarides (114TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’ve stood up here for many years and I’ve been through several of these minimum wage debates and discussions and there have been times when people on my side of the aisle have voted for them. So the notion that this is a bipartisan issue I think is an unfair representation. But unfortunately Connecticut is technically in a contracted downward spiral, that is not my opinion, that is not his opinion that is data. That is pure unadulterated data so to say that Connecticut is not in a serious situation is just being blind to the reality. We can sit here and debate all day and we can each have our opinions and we can lean in one direction or the other but the numbers speak for themselves. The decline in
population, the exodus of business those are numbers those are not my opinions or my spin. And so this time we’re discussing the minimum wage we believe that the State of Connecticut is in a different place and unfortunately I listened to this debate and I hear what we want reality to be versus what reality actually is. Again not an opinion but the hard cold data. There is not one person I know that does not want people to make more money. But I have to say it is a little naïve to just think of things in a vacuum. I don’t know how many more businesses we can go into where we see automated things going on. I just heard yesterday that there are restaurants in this State that are ready to order I-pads and get rid of their servers. No tell me who that helps? Tell me how many of those single moms that have two jobs to support their children that helps. How many? I don’t understand how we sit there everyday we see businesses closing. We see Sears close. We see Toys-R-Us close. We hear Bed, Bath and Beyond is now closing many stores and let’s be honest most of us in here like everybody else out
there will sit online and order something before we take the very limited time we have in our day to get in our car and go to a parking lot and schlep around a mall cause it’s easier, because we’re all busy and we have a lot of things to do and we have to do it with limited time and that’s why all the malls we’re talking about have open storefronts. That’s why major companies that have been around for decades have closed or are thinking of closing and what that results in is less jobs and yes, absolutely, there are lots of reasons why businesses are closing. But I will tell you this, the hard cold data in the State of Connecticut will tell you that this is one of, if not the most business unfriendly states in the United States of America, not because Connecticut is not beautiful, it’s not because Connecticut is not situated between cities that are great. Its not because we’re not near the water. Those are all the great things about Connecticut. But there is a reason it’s happening and nobody is thinking about that reason because we’re focused on one item. And passing this law is going to get some
people more wages and it is going to cost a lot of people their jobs. So not only are not going to be making $15 dollars an hour they are not going to be making any dollars an hour. I don’t know how that takes care of the people in this State. I don’t know how that takes care of the people in the good Representative’s district, in my district or anybody else’s in this State. And I’ll tell you something that nobody probably wants me to say but I’m going to say it anyway, two years ago we were here all year, took us till November to get a budget and that was very difficult in a lot of ways but it took us till November to get a budget because we had to work together to make sure there were enough votes to pass a budget. And why was that? Not because all of a sudden people felt charitable, not because all of a sudden people said, you know, I don’t know why all these years we haven’t worked together to make a decision on all these issues. There’s one reason and one reason only there was a tie in the Senate and a four vote difference in the House. The End. And I heard one of my colleagues say today that she
was very disappointed this year because two years ago we all worked together so well and came out with what we believed was the best product for the State and she was disappointed that we hadn’t done that this year. That is no one’s surprise because politics always wins the day. Always wins the day to the detriment to the good people in this State, to the detriment of nonprofits who can’t afford this, to the detriment of the intellectual and mentally disabled population who are not going to be able to get out there and go into society and mix with other people and have some purpose in life cause they have a job to go to. To the detriment of kids in high school that we want to have experiences and jobs, we are not going to have those now cause nobody can afford to pay them. So although I completely understand the intention of this Bill and I completely respect the idea of wanting people to make more money, we are putting people out of work, we are stopping children from having experiences they should have, we are stopping a disabled population from assimilating and integrating in a
place and giving them purpose in life. We stand in this building, we talk about how supportive we are of all those groups and then something like this that doesn’t just affect the group we want to effect but affects 20 other areas in a detrimental way, nobody thinks twice about. Nobody thinks twice about. So one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle today said “everyone deserves to be treated fairly and shame on anybody who doesn’t support this” what I’ll say to you is everyone does deserve to be treated fairly and to put your head down and plow through something to reach one goal when you don’t seem to care how you effected everybody else in this State is shameful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

    Representative Ritter of the 1st District. You have the floor, sir.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had some remarks that I was excited to give, I thought maybe yesterday but this morning and now this afternoon
and would have meant a lot for me for a lot of reasons to give those remarks. I represent the City of Hartford, the 1st District, Representative Hall probably took some of the same things I might have used statistically speaking and one of the great parts of having this job beyond working with everybody in this Chamber and my great caucus you get to go last. So on such difficult debates, emotional debates some highs and some lows over the last 14 hours you do your best to summarize and there is a little pressure with that but it is a great honor and a great responsibility. But part of leadership is recognizing that sometimes someone else deserves the opportunity to do that. Somebody who did something so difficult, stressful and unique for so long who has lead on this, I don’t think it is fair that I were to wrap up. I did talk to the Minority Leader about it, I did talk to the Speaker about it, I think that would be appropriate given the amount of work and time that was put into this that I defer to Representative Robin Porter the Chair of the Labor Committee to summarize the debate
for our caucus, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Majority Leader.

Representative Porter of the 94th District, you have the floor, madam.

REP. PORTER (94TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you Majority Leader for giving me this honor and for giving me your time. It’s been a long, long debate but the time we’re done it will be 12 hours that we all have been here in this Chamber. It’s been a long hard struggle and I’m not just talkin about this debate, I’m not just talkin about this Fight for Fifteen, for $15 dollar minimum wage that is not even a livable wage in this State but it is a step forward. This has been a labor of love [Sighs], a love that I have for my community, a passion that I have for my people and I’m not just talkin about the people that live in my district. I’m talkin about every single citizen that lives in the State of Connecticut. I think the thing that really resonates with me right now at this moment that has been crystalized over
and over again but today really, really resonates. It’s how polarized this country is, this State is, this nation is, this world is and I can only speak to it from my perspective because my experience is what has shaped that perspective and I do realize that we all come from different places, spaces, cultures, experiences that’s what makes us or should make us great and I do my best every single day to show love, to remain humble and to just listen and try to understand what it’s like. And last year when I toured around this State knocking on doors for my party it was one of the most greatest experiences I had because it showed me why my colleagues on the other side of the aisle fight for what they fight for and when I first got here I didn’t understand it because it wasn’t important to me, it wasn’t my necessity, it wasn’t what I needed and my people needed because our needs and our experiences are different. But when I went around I started to understand environment, water and energy and you know, all the things that weren’t a priority in my platform because the reality of where I come
from, the struggle is real. My sister, my mother, Representative Toni Walker she talks about mothers who she helped because they had to work two and three jobs and couldn’t be there for their kids. I know about those mothers because I was one of those mothers, divorced, single mom, raised two kids, worked two and three jobs to make ends meet not because I wasn’t qualified but we know we live in a world where the playing field still isn’t level, it’s just not and I struggled to make ends meet. But I thank God for my village, I thank God for my community, I thank God for the compassion of the people that crossed my path. I thank God for my grandmother and my mother, two strong Black women that showed me what it was to take two nickels and make a dollar, three nickels and make a dollar out of 15 cent. I know what it is to go to bed with my belly in my back because there was only enough food to feed my kids, that’s my experience. That’s what I lived. And to be in this Chamber today, doin the work that I do, nobody but God, nobody but God, never in a million years would I have imagined that
I would be standin here makin this speech or even
doin the things I’ve done up to now and I take no
credit for it, none whatsoever. I give God all the
glory because I believe I was chosen, many are
called but few are chosen and I believe I was chosen
to be here for such a time as this and went I got to
this buildin I felt like I suffered from imposter
syndrome, I didn’t believe that I belonged here. I
didn’t believe that I’d fit in. I didn’t believe
that I was qualified to be here because I was so
different than many of the people that were here.
And after a while bein here what I realized was yeah
I was supposed to be here and it was my experience
that qualified me to be in this buildin. It was my
struggle, it was my life story, it was what I had
been through that was gonna help shape my destiny
and my pathway in this buildin because when I got
here I didn’t have a clue. People talk about being
wet behind the ears, I was soakin wet behind the
ears and I’ve lived a life of sink or swim. That is
what I know. And I will say this, there has been a
lot of things said here today, a lot of things said
here today and I don’t take it personal, I don’t because I believe in each and everyone of our hearts we do want to do right and we do want to do good and we base that, it is rooted and grounded and what we’ve been through, what our experience has been. My heart’s desire is that what I experienced last year will be experienced by every single one of this in this buildin that we will venture outside of this Chamber and outside of our district and that we will visit one another and talk and listen to one another and learn about one another, I mean really and be able to amongst each other naked and not ashamed, vulnerable but yet safe. That is my desire because if we can do that in this buildin then we can take it outside these walls and we can really change the world. We talk about makin America great again I am here to tell ‘ya American ain’t been great yet, but each and every one of us has the power to make that happen today, right now because this is not about me, this is bit about you, none of us individually, this is so much bigger than us. We’ve been charged to do somethin that I believe has been timed for
now. The things that were seein, the things that we’re hearin, the things that are happenin and we know they’re wrong and not to say nothin and fight for that and for the ones that do stand-up and fight for that to be made to feel that that’s wrong, that’s not right. It’s not right. You know, [sighs] a lot of things, you know, we talked about automation, we created that, that’s nothin new. We created a monster, you know, this downward spiral that we’re in, we have created a second class citizenry and we don’t want to own it. We have the haves and the have nots and we have the power to change that. I’ve often been told that I can’t legislate love, I say we legislate hate, so why can’t we legislate love because is only what justice looks like when it shows up in public and we have to do what’s right, you know, to [Sighs]. It was said that we were stopping children from having experiences that they should have, this inequality that we have created is what stops children from havin the experiences that they should have and those experiences should not be based upon your zip
code or what area of the State you live in, that should be free and open to all because I truly believe in my heart when you take care of the least of us you have taken care of all of us. All of us. No one has to be left behind. Poverty is generational just like wealth is generational but that is only because of the system we’ve created and we’ve allowed to grow out of control. But we have the power to change that, we really do. We talk about a stagnant economy that stagnant economy in Connecticut and nationwide was birthed out of the stagnant wages that we see. When we can talk about 50 years of people whose income has not changed in the power of their dollar has not changed but neither has the labor and the sweat and the blood and tears that have gone into it changed. What do we do about that? Who do we hold accountable? Well I’m willin to say that I hold myself accountable and I hope that there’s many more that will stand wit me and hold themselves accountable because we all have played a part in this and I don’t have a problem ownin mine. I will hold myself accountable. All I
ask is that each and everyone of us be willin to do the same. It’s not my feelings, you know, a lot of times people say, oh you’re passionate and your emotional, you know, you and your feelins. I’m not in my feelins, I’m in my experience, the experience that I’ve lived for almost 53 years in this skin. And it’s different. It’s different. And I don’t even know how to describe what it’s like because I have to ask myself sometimes why is it like this, why me? Why do people that look like me, why are we treated like this? Why do people feel the way they feel about us? Cause I ain’t got nothin but love and it’s hard for me to understand this but what I do recognize is that it’s history and it’s bad history and it’s time that we changed that history. We’ve got to come together, we have to do better and today just as the good Representative stated the numbers in his district, there was 332, there are 332,000 workers in total that will benefit from the passage of this Bill but in the 94th district there is 4,309 people in my district that will benefit from this. And it may not seem like a lot, it might
not seem all that important but I’m here to tell you when you are broke and you don’t have two nickels to rub together, somebody hands you ten dollars, ten dollars it feels like a hundred, been there. I’m speakin from experience.

I want to thank every single person that helped me, I want to thank all my people, my union brothers and sisters, my collegiate brothers and sisters in this Chamber, I want to thank the businesses and the small businesses in my community that have told me that they support this and yeah it’s gonna be a struggle for ‘em but guess what, I’ll figure out how to make it happen because it’s the right thing to do. And they’re gonna do the same thing that the poor people that have been workin this poverty wages have to do for decades they will make a way out of no way and if you believe what I believe God supplies the need, all he needs is a will and vessel to get it done. We’ve got to have a little more faith people and I’m not talking about faith in ourselves, I’m not talking about power in ourselves. I’m not talking about titles, I’m talkin about a
higher power that I believe takes care of all of us and that is just my belief and I’m here to tell you it’s brought me a mighty long way. So thank you to my leadership for what you’ve done. I know we’ve had our hard knocks; we’ve been through the mill together but I dot nothin but love for you guys, I do. And I thank you for your support, I thank you for gettin us here, I thank each and everyone of my team players because you all know my sayin, “teamwork makes the dream work and the bigger the team the bigger the dream.” So let’s expand that and let’s do some real bipartisan work because I listed to that today and it makes it hard when we say we want to work and do bipartisan work but our perspectives are so polarized and that’s okay but the only way to get passed that is to understand one another and understand one another’s experiences and that’s somethin I’m willin to do. I’m willin do to that with each and every individual in this Chamber, huh, in this State because that’s just who I am and I thank my grandmother and my mother for that because they deposited that in me and I’ll go ahead
and close but I just really appreciate this day and the strength that God has given me to stand on this floor for 12 hours and get through a debate in support of somethin that I believe in, somethin I fought for and somethin that I’m lookin forward to seein go to the Senate and when it gets there I want no trouble in the Senate, ya all. [Laughter]

Whatever ya all need to work out, work it out today cause this Bill is on it’s way and the people of this State deserve to see this Bill passed and it was said it was going to pass the same way it passed last year, I’ll rebut that. I’m askin for everyone in this Chamber to vote for this and I leave the decision up to you but that is my ask because I believe it is our responsibility to lift up the least of them to so that we can join ranks as the most of them. The 99 percent in this country and in this State should not be strugglin while the top one percent are livin really, really, really well. That’s not right but we have the power to get it right. So thank you for your indulgence each and every one of you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank
you Majority Leader and thank you to my team you
know who you are. I want to thank you and I love
you all. God bless you all. Thank you, Mr.
Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Staff and guests please to the Well of the
House. Members take your seats; the machine will be
open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber. The House of
Representatives is voting by roll, Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all members voted? Ladies and gentlemen I am going to remind the Chamber again after the vote
is announced and when the machine is locked, we do not have reactions here in the House, you can save
that for outside the Chamber in your Caucus rooms. If all the members have voted, please check the
board to insure your vote has been properly cast. Prior to closing the machine. Representative Gucker
of the 138th for what purpose do you rise, sir.

Hold on. Please proceed, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE GUCKER (138TH):

I rise to say, I guess point of order in my rush from running from Danbury today, I hit the wrong button for Representative Gilcrest so I would like to have that removed and I guess mine as well.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please remove the vote for Representative Gilcrest from the board. So what’s gonna happen Representative Gucker when the machine is locked the Clerk will then remove that vote from the board. Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE GUCKER (138TH):

Thank you and I apologize for the error.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

It’s okay, sir. The machine will be locked. The inadvertent vote has been removed and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 5004 as Amended by House “A”
Total Number Voting 144
Necessary for Passage 73
Those voting Yea 85
Those voting Nay 59
Absent not voting 6

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The Bill passes as Amended [Gavel]. [Shouting]

Ladies and gentlemen of the Chamber [Gavel] there will be no reaction [Applause]. [Gavel] [Gavel]

Thank you. Are there any announcements or introductions? Representative Ritter of the 1st District, sir you have the floor. Representative Currey you now have the floor.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I rise for the purpose of an announcement. I hope that the Chamber will indulge me in wishing Mary Alice Hughes in the Clerk’s office a Happy Birthday today!

[Applause]

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Are there any other announcements or introductions? Representative McGee of the 5th
District, sir you have the floor.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know folks are headed out but please be reminded that on this evening the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus will hold it’s annual fund raiser Spring Fling at Red Rock so go get some sleep and come back and have an amazing time. If you are in need of tickets please see myself I’ll still take your money. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

    Representative McGee there is a prerequisite of dancing shoes I’m told also is that correct, sir.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

    You are absolutely correct, so ladies wear your flats, guys put on some socks.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

    Thank you very much. Representative Reyes of the 75th, sir you have the floor.

REP. REYES (75th):

    Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just rise for the purpose of Journal Notations and I’m going to share
with the Clerk there is a litany of lists I’m holding that were Business in District, Business outside of Chamber, one medical and one funeral I am going to share with the Clerk right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Journal so note. Representative Betts. Let’s skip Representative Betts, we’ll come back to him. Representative Scanlon of the 98th. No Representative Scanlon of the 98th? We’ll bounce him off. Representative Piscopo of the 76th, sir you now have the floor.

REP. PISCOPO (76TH):

Thank you Mr. Speaker for Journal Notation.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please proceed.

REP. PISCOPO (76TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Journal please note Representatives Pavalock-D’Amato was out of state on business; Representative Fusco missed votes due to illness; Representatives Frye, Camillo, Labriola, Wood, Davis, Rebimbas, and Floren in
district on business. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Are there any other announcements or introductions? Representative Currey.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there being no further business on the Clerk’s desk I move that we adjourn to the Call of the Chair.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

When we comin back, Representative Currey?

REP. CURREY (11TH):

We are back in on Tuesday everyone so enjoy the weekend.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much. Question before the Chamber is adjourning subject to the Call of the Chair. Is there objection, is there objection? Seeing none, we are adjourned subject to the Call of the Chair.
(On motion of Representative Currey of the 11th District, the House adjourned at 12:17 o’clock p.m., to meet again at the Call of the Chair.)
CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 1,033 pages is a complete and accurate transcription of a digital sound recording of the House Proceedings on Wednesday, May 8, 2019.

I further certify that the digital sound recording was transcribed by the word processing department employees of Alpha Transcription, under my direction.

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