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LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEE  
COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING

March 3, 2020  
10:30 am

CHAIRPERSON: Representative Robyn Porter

SENATORS: Kushner, Lesser, Miner,  
Osten

REPRESENTATIVES: Fishbein, Hall, Luxenberg,  
Polletta, Rutigliano,  
Smith, Vargas, Winkler,  
Wilson Pheanious

REP. PORTER (94TH): The Labor and Public Employee public hearing and before doing that, we will have Vice-Chair, Representative Hall, read us the housekeeping rules.

REP. HALL (59TH): Thank you, Madam Chair. In the interest of safety, I would ask you to note the location of and access to the exits in this hearing room. The two doors through which you entered the room are the emergency exits and are marked with exit signs. In the event of an emergency, please walk quickly to the nearest exit. After exiting the room, go to your right and proceed to the main stairs, and follow the exit signs to one of the fire stairs. Please quickly exit the building and follow any instructions from the Capitol Police. Do not delay and do not return unless and until you are advised that it is safe to do so. In the event of a lockdown announcement, please remain in the hearing room and stay away from the exit doors until an all-clear announcement is heard. Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative Hall, and I will at this time ask my Co-Chair, Senator Kushner, if she has any opening remarks.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): That's all right. I'll wait. I'm sure I'll have things to say during the hearing. Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Senator, and with that, we will get started with our first person up on our legislators and elected officials list. Representative Jillian Gilchrest coming to testify on 5269, AN ACT CONCERNING WORKING CONDITIONS. Representative Gilchrest, you have the floor.

REP. GILCHREST (18TH): Thank you. Good morning, Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members of the Labor and Public Employees' Committee. I am Jillian Gilchrest, and I represent the 18th District of West Hartford. I'm here to testify on House Bill 5269, AN ACT CONCERNING WORKING CONDITIONS IN SUPPORT OF AN EQUITABLE HOLIDAY POLICY FOR CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES.

I propose Connecticut offer full-time state employees at least two floating holidays per fiscal year, which must be used as whole days within the fiscal year. The goal is to keep this policy cost neutral. Employees will not receive any additional paid time off because they will take the holidays of their choosing in lieu of current state holidays. I am joined by Leslie Gertner. She is a constituent in West Hartford, and she is actually the individual who brought this concept to me, and so I'm going to turn it over to her.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative. If you could please state your name and spell your last name, if needed.

LESLIE GERTNER: Sure.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you.

LESLIE GERTNER: Yep. Good morning. My name is Leslie Gertner. Last name is G-E-R-T-N-E-R. I am a state employee. I work for the Department of Children and Families. I have been employed with the Department of Children and Families for approximately 21-1/2 years. During that time, I have used approximately 13 weeks or 66 days of personal vacation or unpaid time to observe my own Jewish faith holidays. For years, I just sort of let it happen. I just did it because it was my holiday and I was going to do what I needed to do to celebrate the things that I need to celebrate, but as I've gotten older and have my own children, and I'm trying to observe with them, I don't feel that using my personal time or my vacation time or unpaid time for a religious event or a religious holiday, or cultural component that I should be using those days when others are handed those at the same rate that I have, so those days that I get, others also have, but then they have their holidays given to them as part of the 12 paid within what we get. I don't complain about my pay rate. I don't complain about the days that we have off. I think it's certainly fair from my perspective. I -- I am of the Jewish faith, as I said, but I'm also in a multifaith home. My spouse is of the Catholic faith, and so we celebrate both things, and so we often have to either celebrate separately, or take time to celebrate, and so I'm looking to use some floating days on a day that I could work instead just to manage this a little bit more equitably. I think it's a religious right to -- to be able to take that day without taking time. A personal day to me is my daughter being honored at her high school. I want to be able to attend on a personal day, but I need five days a year for my Jewish holidays, so it

doesn't usually work out for me that way, so I -- I am urging for this to move forward for that reason -- for more equitable time.

I will just note also that I have a -- more than a handful of friends that observe things other than the Christian faith holidays, friends that are Muslim, friends that are -- celebrate Hinduism or Buddhism, or other religions, and they also do the same thing. They have to take time, personal leave or vacation days in order to observe their days as well, so just in honor of them, I'd like to bring that forward. One of my counterparts that came to Jillian with me, his name is Cron Webb [phonetic]. He was unable to be here today. I'm pretty sure he sent a letter in, though, in agreement with this concept for that reason alone as he is of the Muslim faith, so.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and the other young lady that's with you; are you speaking?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I was on the list, so --

LESLIE GERTNER: I believe she's number three, but.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. No problem. Just wondering. All right. Thank you for --

LESLIE GERTNER: I'm happy to answer any questions, and then wanted to let you know that I did submit testimony that does cite other states that have policies and some additional ideas in the testimony.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. Thank you. Questions and comments from the committee? Yes. Representative Wilson Pheanious.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Yes. I'm wondering whether this is something that the -- the -- do you

go through the union at all to look at the existing contract or -- or advocate with them to make changes within the contract?

LESLIE GERTNER: Yeah. So, for 20 years, I've gone through the union, whenever they come to the building, to ask questions, and they've told me that I have three personal days to use, and that's kind of the conversation that's happened for many of my counterparts. You have three days, use those. That's kind of where it's been left. I've been -- I've sent all of my paperwork that I've been working on with Ms. Gilchrest to the union president, and so they are aware that I was moving forward with trying to do something different because I didn't feel it was equitable the way they were handling it, and I have met with the unions to negotiate the state contracts, and they are open to the idea.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): But, they're not bringing it forward? I mean they --

LESLIE GERTNER: I'm unsure if they submitted testimony.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Okay. I'm -- it's dangerous to think out loud, but I'm wondering about the administrative difficulty of implementing this, you know, because as you point out there are many different religions, many different times that people would take days or could take days with a floating day, and I'm just thinking sort of out loud about how difficult this might be to administer.

LESLIE GERTNER: In looking at the other states and then thinking it through, I think there'd have to be parameters on -- at the start of the fiscal year it's decided upon which two or three days you are

going to float for which two or three current state holidays. I think an outstanding question as the state moves towards telecommuting, I think that can be a solution for when someone might choose to float a holiday for a holiday where the state building is closed. With that said, there will certainly be employees where that's not the case, and I do think we need to think about parameters of how to ensure that we don't have to open state buildings for the floating holidays someone might swap out.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Well, like I said, I would want to talk with people about how it -- you know, about that particular aspect of it. I understand the impetus behind the request and sympathize with that. It shouldn't all just be, you know, about Christian holidays, but on the other hand, I'm thinking there's a contract in place, and this would be a substantial change, so that -- that's my concern.

LESLIE GERTNER: And, I do believe the contracts are coming up to be negotiated, and so it is my hope that by us having this conversation here, we can move this concept along, and answer some of those questions.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): That's the way I'd like to see it come, so thank you so much for your testimony.

LESLIE GERTNER: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any further questions or comments from the committee? I'm seeing none. We'd like to thank you for your testimony today.

LESLIE GERTNER: Thank you.

REP. GILCHREST (18TH): Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Okay. And, next up, we will have Chairman Stephen Morelli, with WCC testifying on Senate Bill 351, AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR AND TECHNICAL CHANGES TO WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT. Good after -- good morning.

STEPHEN MORELLI: Good morning. Good morning, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Representative Polletta, and members of the Labor and Public Employees' Committee. My name is Steve Morelli, and I am Chairman of the Worker's Compensation Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 351, AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR AND TECHNICAL CHANGES IN THE WORKER'S COMPENSATION ACT.

The commission greatly appreciates you raising this legislation and believes the proposed changes will codify current administrative practices and remove outdated statutory language. I have submitted more detailed testimony for review, but I will briefly summarize what this legislation will accomplish. The substance of Senate Bill 351 is almost identical to the minor and technical legislation that was passed out of this committee unanimously last session and continues to have the support of the Connecticut Bar Association. The only difference between the language of last year and this proposal is that the commission is requesting an additional section that amends section 31-298 of the Connecticut general statutes to remove the word cassette from the commission's requirement to provide an audiocassette recording of formal hearings.

Just like in the legislation passed out of this committee last year, this bill would change the

title of Worker's Compensation Commissioner to Administrative Law Judge. This would more accurately reflect the adjudicative and judicial functions of our present Worker's Compensation commissioners, reduce the number of times the advisory board of the commission is required to meet, remove the commissioner administrative purposes only connection to the Department of Labor, and remove other outdated statutory language that does not reflect current administrative practices under the act. These minor and technical changes will align statutory language with moderate administrative practices and promote a framework that more accurately reflects current law. I thank you again for providing me with this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 351, and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have. And, good morning, Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Good morning. How are you?

STEPHEN MORELLI: I'm well.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Morelli. Any comments or questions from the committee? Wow. That's a shocker. Well, thank you for your testimony.

STEPHEN MORELLI: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome.

STEPHEN MORELLI: Have a good day.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. You as well, Mr. Morelli. Next up, we have Karen Anderson with DFS who is going to be testifying on 5269, which is AN ACT CONCERNING WORKING CONDITIONS. Good morning.

KAREN ANDERSON: Good morning.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Could you please turn your mic on. Thank you.

KAREN ANDERSON: Good morning, Representative Porter and Senator Kushner, and thank you for --

REP. PORTER (94TH): I'm just going to interrupt you for one brief moment. If you could just slide closer to the mic and maybe bring it down towards you. Because we're gonna -- does it move? I'm not sure if you can slide that forward. No. It doesn't. Okay. I can't see it. All right. Just try to get as close as you can for transcription purposes.

KAREN ANDERSON: Can you hear me now?

REP. PORTER (94TH): A little better. Give me your outside voice.

KAREN ANDERSON: CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? [Laughing].

REP. PORTER (94TH): Yes. Thank you! [Laughter].

KAREN ANDERSON: So, again, I'll say good morning, Senator Kushner and Representative Porter, and thank you for this opportunity to -- to share with you. I'm basically here in support of Leslie's initiative. I am a Baha'i, which I also a religious minority here, and I have also worked for the State of Connecticut for over 20 years, and like Leslie, have had to use my vacation time or my personal leave time to observe holy days -- Baha'i holy days where I'm asked to suspend work, and so when she brought this initiative forward, I saw it as an opportunity to gather together with members of other world religions who encounter this dilemma, and I'm hoping that Connecticut will decide to be one of the

first to -- to make this an issue just in terms of equity.

Um, what are the other points I wanted to make? Religious equity means treating all religions the same, so that would be Christians, and Siks, and Hindus and Buddhist, and what have you, and we happen to live in a culture that forces me to take Christmas off. I'm not gonna lie. I appreciate the day off, but at the same time, it's not my holiday, and so I have my own holidays that I feel that it would be fair to allow me to maybe swap out Columbus Day to work Columbus Day whether I'm telecommuting or working in an office that has the ability to be open and have a high holy day of my own and be off and get paid.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and thank you for your testimony. Any comments or questions from the committee? Yes. Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH): Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for coming and sharing your concerns with the Labor Committee. It's interesting that you're willing to swap out one holiday for another holiday, and I would assume then you would be willing to swap out either Christmas or Easter or other Christian holidays that are typically recognized and work those days as opposed to having to work on your holy day. Is that fair to say?

KAREN ANDERSON: Yes. That's fair to say. I -- I don't personally have any attachment to certain days like Christmas or Good Friday. Those are days that I'm basically forced to take those days off, but they don't have any religious significance for me, and my days like Nowruz or Ridvan or the Declaration of the Bab or -- those -- those are high holy days

in my faith, and in order for me to observe them as I'm obligated to do, I need to use my own time, save up my vacation time, which actually kind of creates a dilemma because then it -- it lessens the amount of time I have to actually take a vacation.

REP. SMITH (108TH): So, I understand that. Have you -- typically, if there's a Christmas holiday or Easter, Good Friday holiday in your situation with the state, the state's offices are closed --

KAREN ANDERSON: Right.

REP. SMITH (108TH): Would you be able to actually work? Is there -- I'm assuming there's enough work to go around on that day where you could still be productive but I'm not positive. So, would you be able to be productive and positive, and if yes, have you approached that -- I guess it would be through your bargaining unit -- to get that done?

KAREN ANDERSON: In my current capacity, I'm an eligibility worker, and I work for a special unit, so I carry a caseload, and most of my work is done via computer, and so I very well could work any day of the week any time of the day if given that opportunity. I'm not currently a telecommuter, but if I were, I could work without the burden of having to open an office building. I could work on those days listed -- Christmas, Good Friday, what have you. I have the capacity, if given the correct -- the appropriate tools, I have the capacity to do the work without any additional cost to the state. I personally have not approached my union, but as Leslie stated in her former testimony, she has, and perhaps there are other individual state employees of other faith backgrounds who have, and the response is always you're -- you have three personal

days to use, which -- which is true, and we have used those days, but it's not fair and equitable.

REP. SMITH (108TH): You know, personally, I would have no issue you know as an employer if I knew based on your faith that you know if you advised the employer on the date of hire, said listen, my faith, I have holy days -- on whatever days they are -- and I'd like to have those days off, and then a business employer can make a decision, yes. I don't have a problem with that. That would work out. We can make arrangements, or that would be an issue, and you know, the job's probably not right for you. And, your situation's a little bit different because you have a bargaining unit who bargains for you, and I don't know how we as a state can get in the middle of a -- a contract between you and whoever you're bargaining unit is, so I think really the issue lies there. I hear what you're saying. I don't have an issue with it, but I don't know that we're the one to address it, so perhaps other members feel differently. But, I thank you for sharing your testimony, your concerns. I understand what they are, but I'm not sure we're the resource to resolve it.

KAREN ANDERSON: Can I just say one thing to --

REP. SMITH (108TH): Of course. Sure.

KAREN ANDERSON: To that comment? So, I think addressing it to the bargaining unit would really be -- put the burden on the employee, and require us to kind of fight for the right within our bargaining unit to be permitted to be recognized for our -- our different faith; whereas, I think what we're asking is that the state itself take the initiative to -- to -- to say this is -- this is what we see is fair

and equitable -- like having Christmas off and Good Friday, and whatever other state holidays you've head, but without adding, so that because -- because the -- the pool of citizens of the State of Connecticut has such a rich diversity of religious diversity, you know, it would be mayhem to try and you know add Hindu dates and -- and Jewish holidays and Muslim holidays and Baha'i holidays. However, to consider allowing us to utilize floating holidays, create some kind of mechanism where we could take our holy days -- a portion of our holy days and impose -- superimpose it on existing holidays that don't have any significance to us. To me, that would be very progressive of the state to make that claim and not -- and -- and kind of support us rather than putting the burden on the employees to go to each bargaining unit. I'm not in the same bargaining unit as Leslie, and there's you know however many thousands of state employees that would require them to take up this stance, but I think what we're asking is for Connecticut to look at this and -- and consider that [clearing throat] religious equity is -- is our right as -- as -- as members of -- as citizens of this country and the citizens of the State of Connecticut.

REP. SMITH (108TH): I don't think I disagree with you, but I'm not -- again, I'm not sure we're the ones to do it because if we make a law -- a law applies to everyone, so you know, you have private industry out there that could be affected by a law that says you have to honor these various religions and provide floating holidays, and to me, that should be left between the private employer and the private employee, and you do have somebody bargaining or negotiating on your behalf, and I

truly believe that's where it lies. I understand we want to be fair and equitable to everybody, and your religion is not my religion, and I can appreciate that and respect that, but I don't think -- again, I don't think it's here, but maybe I'm wrong, but thank you.

KAREN ANDERSON: Thank you for your time.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Any further comments? Yes. Representative Wilson Pheanious.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Yes. I'm actually I think reiterating that last point. I believe I don't think the -- that the law allows us to override a contract in the way that you're suggesting we do. I'm not sure that -- that I believe that there is a clause within the contracts that doesn't allow us to simply come in and make a change like that unless as was just observed -- it is a law that affects everybody, and that's not what you're -- what you're asking for. You're talking about a specific contract with the State of Connecticut, so I'm concerned that -- about our ability to actually do that. I do understand what you're saying. I understand the need. I agree that there should be equity, but I'm not sure that this is the way that you can get it, and I do think that you have to work through the contract, so that's just my -- my comment on this.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative. Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Thank you. So, when I saw this on the agenda a couple of weeks ago, I was intrigued, and I'm still intrigued. I was just having a sidebar conversation with Senator Kushner

because I'm not sure that a subset of a subset of a bargaining group would ever -- you'd ever be able to compel them to make this one of their most important issues in negotiation, so I think that's where you are. I think -- I think where you are is that there are -- there are -- there perhaps are not enough of you in each one of these bargaining groups to say rather than have this be the issue of the day that we want to fight for on behalf of everybody within that group, we're more interested in retirement or we're more interested in a couple of other things, and so for that reason, I remain intrigued by the points that you've made. I would disagree with my colleagues. I think the state has already demonstrated the ability to intercede in contracts. I haven't agreed with it, but we have done that in the past. As much as I am willing to have the conversation under the heading of this bill, I feel compelled to at least put it on the record that when we raise broad topics like this, it's inside baseball, right. No one knows what the intent of this bill was. If you look at the way it was drafted, it would have almost permitted anybody to come in and testify on anything, and so all the people that are trying to run a business, all of the supervisors that work for the State of Connecticut, I doubt very much the governor has it tuned on, I doubt his commissioners have it tuned on, and so therefore, as important as your message is and I want you to know that. I believe your message is important. The context in which it's being raised is really only half of the game, and I'm hopeful that next year there's an opportunity to have a more robust conversation under the actual title so that everyone knows that this is the conversation, so employers that may not be affected by union

contracts might be a little more willing to listen to one of their employees when they ask would it be okay if we exchanged the day because that's really what it comes down to. It comes down to you being able to practice your faith on an equal footing, and so I'm happy that you're here. I'm happy that people are going to be able to hear this perhaps for the first time, but I really am a bit concerned that only some people saw this as an opportunity for this issue. So, thank you.

KAREN ANDERSON: I appreciate your comment.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and I appreciate your testimony, and I do see this in quite a reversed way that it was just stated. This is an opportunity for anyone -- that is true -- to come before us and testify on any act concerning working conditions, and this happens to be one, so I -- I feel that this is fair game for everyone and is open to the public. So, thank you for coming in and giving voice to your concerns regarding a working condition that impacts you personally.

KAREN ANDERSON: Thank -- thank you for your time.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you.

KAREN ANDERSON: You're welcome.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Next up, we have Representative Mitch Bolinsky, and he will be speaking on House Bill 5387. He's not here, so we will at this time be moving on to the public hearing -- members of the public list, and we will be starting with Sal Luciano, AFL-CIO, who will be testifying on 229, 348, 5383, and 5386. Welcome, Mr. Luciano.

SAL LUCIANO: Thank you. Good morning, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and members of the Labor and Public Employees' Committee. My name is Sal Luciano, and I am the President of the Connecticut AFL-CIO.

Senate Bill 229 requires the Labor Commissioner to adopt regulations regarding worker's rights. One subject that requires urgent legislative and regulatory attention is the growing use of noncompete agreements. Traditionally, noncompete clauses were found in contracts for highly paid senior managerial and executive employees who have access to sensitive information or develop personal relationships with clients. Today, low-wage employers even in the service restaurant and hospitality industries commonly require noncompete agreement with entry-level positions. This is an abuse of power and must be checked. Amazon requires its warehouse employees to sign agreements that promise "during employment and for 18 months after separation date, employee will not engage in or support the development, manufacture, marketing, or sale of any product or service that competes or is intended to compete with any product or services sold, offered, or otherwise provided by Amazon." In effect, if you left Amazon, for 18 months, you couldn't work anywhere else.

Fast food restaurants are also players in this arena. They discovered provisions that prohibited employees from moving among restaurants in the same corporate chain. Only when threatened with a lawsuit, did seven corporate fast food chains agree to end this practice. The growing use of noncompete agreements is another way employers are rigging the system by eliminating a worker's right to move to a better paying position, the artificially suppressed

wages, which in turn reduces overall economic growth. That is why 27 states, including Massachusetts, New York, Maine, and New Hampshire have passed legislation governing noncomplete -- noncompete clauses.

Senate Bill 348, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE REGARDING THE STATE AND WORKFORCE AND RETIRING EMPLOYEES. Connecticut is facing an impending silver tsunami. A massive wave of state employee retirements is expected to begin in the next three years. A quarter of the state employees, nearly 15,000 career public servants will be eligible to retire on July 1, 2022. Senate Bill 348 takes a responsible approach to respond to the sea change by convening a task force of informed invested stakeholders to make recommendations on succession planning.

House Bill 5383. The gender wage gap created over a decade still persist in Connecticut and nationally. Today, Connecticut women earn an average of 84 cents for ever dollar paid to men. The gender wage gap is more severe for women of color. Asian women working full time year-round earn 83 cents. Black women working full time -- 57 cents. Native women working full time -- 55 cents. Latina women working full time year-round earn 48 cents to the dollar that a white man makes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Mr. Luciano. I'm going to interrupt you really quickly and ask you to wrap up. On the bills that you haven't had an opportunity to hit on, if you could just give us a short synopsis, and then we'll open it up for Q&A. Thank you.

SAL LUCIANO: House Bill 5386 -- the Department of Labor has the authority to issue stop-work orders to

employers who knowingly misrepresent employees as independent contractors or provide false, incomplete, or misleading information to an insurance company on the number of employees for the purposes of paying lower premiums. In 2018, the Department of Labor issued 118 stop-work orders. What we're requesting, a lot of these contractors for them it's the cost of doing business, so we're requesting that the fine, as HB 5386 says, increases the penalty from \$300 dollar to \$500 dollars a day.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for your testimony. Questions and answers. Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I have a couple. Thank you for coming before us today, and particularly on the noncompete issue, I was happy to hear you mention that 27 states have passed bills like what has been proposed here, and I think that's important to know. I think there's a lot of people like myself who are unaware of this issue. We -- we're not working in these low-wage jobs or in these sectors necessarily. There are other people on our committee who are very familiar with the industry but may not be aware of who is doing this and how it's being done. I think it would really help us too if -- it's hard for workers to come in sort of randomly and show us there noncompete agreements, but I think there are some attorneys in the state who have experience working and representing people who are in this situation, so you know, I would appreciate any outreach you can make to those attorneys in, you know, circles that you travel in that would -- would be able to maybe get us some examples of these because I think that would be helpful.

SAL LUCIANO: Sure. James Alexander out of New Haven is one such attorney, and he is familiar with several cases, including a woman who was a fast food worker at McDonalds, wanted to apply to be a supervisor at another McDonalds, and was not able to do so because of the noncompete clause.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): So, that was even within the same national company, but because of the franchise situation?

SAL LUCIANO: Yes. So, what James says is that he doesn't know if that's enforceable in Connecticut or not, but your average worker, especially a low-wage worker is not gonna challenge it. They wouldn't have the resources to be able to find an attorney and challenge such a noncompete clause.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Well, thank you for supplying that information, and we will -- you know, I think we can reach out to him because I think that the committee will really benefit from, you know, examples like that. The other question I have is really regarding previously testimony. We just heard about equitably holidays, and there was some suggestion that this was an issue that should be brought to the union or had been brought to the union, and since I know in a future life you were responsible for a lot of those negotiations. I wondered if you could share any information on that topic as well.

SAL LUCIANO: Sure. I don't think the unions would be opposed to -- to any -- to this legislation. I think the employer, though, might. A lot of people actually need supervision or a physical structure, and if the offices are closed, that could be difficult. I know that when state employees were

granted one of the first contract issues was the three personal days in an attempt to accommodate other religious needs that people may have had, so you have heard them say that the union said, well, you have three personal days. That is the history of -- of why those three personal days were agreed to by the employer back in '77 when we first had the master contract.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I think that's so funny that you mentioned '77. That was the year I started negotiating or representing workers, and I had the same experience that we had this -- we were confronted with this issue and want to make things fair and equitable for everyone, and yet, it's -- it's challenging to know how to do that, and we had the same solution, which was personal days. Now, what we're finding is that people really need those personal days for -- to attend other -- you know, other needs in their life besides a religious need, and so -- and I'm not sure what the solution is. I wonder if you could comment a little -- I know there was a question with the previous witnesses -- a question about whether or not we could legally do this because there is a contract in place, and you know, my -- my understanding is that we can legislate and create a statutory condition where this would have to be addressed however, and that would take precedent over the contracts once we legislated it. Is that your understanding?

SAL LUCIANO: My understanding is that since this would not be taking anything away from any employee, I don't believe there would be an issue if it were legislated. Part of the problem of doing it through the collective bargaining process is exactly what Senator Miner spoke about, which is that when the

survey goes out to bargaining unit employees of what kinds of things they'd like to see, this normally does not come into the top five or six or eight, and so that's -- that's part of the problem.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): And, to that end, I think that because you have experience with this and have heard about this before, I think that the unions and certainly the AFL-CIO, but other unions might be able to be helpful in sitting down with Representative Gilchrest and others who have shared this interest in trying to come up with a workable solution because it is a little complicated. It's -- it's not hard to understand how people who can work from home and telecommute could make this work for them, but it is harder where there's supervision involved or whether -- where it would mean keeping an office open. I think that presents a lot of challenges that we haven't quite figured out, so to that extent, I think, you know, Senator Miner said he looked forward to hearing more conversation about this in the future, and I think we all feel that way. It's something to make a situation equitable for people of all faiths so they can observe their holidays. I think we all would like to see how -- you know, think through how we'd make that happen.

SAL LUCIANO: One possible solution, if I could mention it, could be labor management committee that sits down in every agency and tries to figure out how this might work.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. That's all the questions I have right now, but I might come back for a second time.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH): Thank you, Madam Chair, and good morning, sir.

SAL LUCIANO: Good morning.

REP. SMITH (108TH): So, you're -- on this last issue that you were discussing with Senator Kushner, the history based on the negotiation was that the approved days were for these type of religious days as well -- that was the idea that if you had a personal day you could ideally use it for a religious holiday or whatever actually, but that's what they were negotiated for back then?

SAL LUCIANO: That's the negotiating history with the knowledge that three days may certainly not be enough to cover all of the days.

REP. SMITH (108TH): And, based on your membership's priorities, you're saying that it's -- it's not a high priority for your membership on a year-to-year basis because it's -- I don't know you got it up to eight. I don't even know if it's in the top ten. But, is that fair to say?

SAL LUCIANO: Yes.

REP. SMITH (108TH): And, I don't know if you have seen this. You represent the public sector unions. Is that correct?

SAL LUCIANO: I used to represent public sector unions. As the President of the AFL, we have private sector building trades as well.

REP. SMITH (108TH): So, would you see this working in the private sector as well? A law that would require an employer to give a paid holiday for a religious holiday.

SAL LUCIANO: I can imagine that employers would have a variety of interest regarding this, including allowing it if they could to improve morale for their employees, and that's why I suggested a labor management meeting because there are things -- I think workers are reasonable, and I think they understand that the employer has certain issues that -- that are required and important to the, and vice versa, so I think if they sat down, they could come up with a solution.

REP. SMITH (108TH): Yeah. I think they could come up with a solution too, and I -- especially on the private side, and the public side is -- in my mind -- a whole different world where you have representatives negotiating on your behalf. The private sector -- and you have some large employers that could handle and you have some small employers that possibly could not handle it, and especially I think in the construction industry there is -- they don't have the holidays that -- you know, we here in the state have. We don't -- you know, they don't get Columbus Day off, and President's Day off, and --

SAL LUCIANO: Mm-hm.

REP. SMITH (108TH): A lot of these other holidays that you might be able to float for religious holidays, but I do suspect they're willing to work with the employee because they value the employee, to keep that person happy and give him or her time off to do whatever they need to do for their religious holiday provided they make up the work somewhere else or if they wanted to work on a Christian holiday. I'm sure they could work that out privately, but I'd hate to see the state get in

the middle of those -- just say one-law-fit-all sizes because it's -- as you know very well having represented both sides -- it's very different from public to private, so. But, perhaps the management labor committee might be able to work that out, but it's probably a good idea. Thank you.

SAL LUCIANO: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Yes.  
Representative Winkler, followed by Representative Wilson Pheanious.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Yes. It is my understanding under the supercedence clause that the legislature cannot make a unilateral change in a contract against the will of the union. Is that your understanding?

SAL LUCIANO: Yes.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you, Madam Chair.

SAL LUCIANO: I just I don't think the union would object is my point.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Right. So, you're thinking that this would be an acceptable change --

SAL LUCIANO: Yes.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): After a labor management committee and within the current contractual agreement?

SAL LUCIANO: Exactly. Because it doesn't really take away anything from anybody.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome, Representative.  
Representative Wilson Pheanious.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Yes. Thank you, Madam. This is on the noncompete agreement. I'm wondering if you can discuss when such agreements are appropriate because I think what you are identifying is that obviously they are overused in the case of -- of Amazon, and you mentioned -- I'm not sure if you're saying they are never appropriate in circumstances where you might be dealing with lower income -- you know --

SAL LUCIANO: No. I -- I am specifically talking about low-wage workers. Clearly, employers use the agreements for a variety of reasons, including protecting trade secrets or reducing costs associated with turnover or worried about the fast of clients from one company to a private business. This is strictly -- I mean what is the trade secret for somebody putting a slice of meat or two slices of meat between two pieces of bread. You know, this is affecting low-wage workers and their ability as -- as was expressed, couldn't even take a promotion because of the noncompete language, so this is specifically -- the proposal is specifically to help those low-wage employee.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): And, to the best of your knowledge, is there no -- I don't know -- methodologies that are used within low-income places where this might be an issue -- the creation of an -- I don't know -- special recipe or something? I simply don't know. Is that ever an issue in these low-income?

SAL LUCIANO: [Chuckling]. I don't believe so.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): [Laughing].

SAL LUCIANO: It made no sense for the woman who worked at McDonalds to not be able to accept the promotion [Crosstalk] at the very same franchise, and when people need a job they'll sign anything. They'll come in, and you know, they're asked to sign these noncompete agreements. Their signatures are on there, and -- and they believe they're enforceable, and those people don't have the ability to be able to challenge it. They don't have the resources.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Okay. Well, thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative. Any further comments or questions? Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Thank you. I'd like to join my co-chair -- any help you can give us in trying to get a copy of that agreement. I -- I think it's -- I would have a hard time understanding why someone that works in a national chain serving the same meal -- we're just saying. I can't imagine that you can deviate from what you can pass over the counter one bit from one McDonalds to the other.

SAL LUCIANO: Right.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): So, any help you can provide us in -- in kind of clearing up whatever document might be available. It would certainly be helpful to me. Thank you.

SAL LUCIANO: Thank you, Senator.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Senator Kushner, for the second time.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Yeah. I -- we've spent a lot of time talking about the fast food example, but

I did want to go back to your example about Amazon as well because -- and I appreciate Representative Wilson Pheanious raising -- reminding us that also seems to be incredibly restrictive and not necessary to protect any particular trade secrets of Amazon, so I -- I am curious do you know if we had that -- had that experience, you know, for a Connecticut worker?

SAL LUCIANO: Yeah. I believe that's standard practice.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): That is, to me, also a very good example of why we need to protect workers from noncompete agreements that are not -- really serve no purpose but to make it more difficult for that person to get another job.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Senator. Any further comments or questions? I'm seeing none. We'd like to thank you for your testimony and your time today.

SAL LUCIANO: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Up next, we have Representative Mitch Bolinsky from the 106th District representing Newtown. You have the floor, sir.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Thank you, Madam Chair. It's -- it's -- it's my pleasure and honor to testify before the Labor Committee today. I want to wish a good day to you and to Co-Chair Kushner, Vice-Chair Hall, and Ranking Member Miner, as well as all the distinguished members of the committee. I want to thank you very much for raising an important little bill that we've had some conversation about in the past, and it is House Bill

5387. It's AN ACT CONCERNING WORKER'S COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR MEMBER OF UNDERWATER SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS AND K-9 SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS. So, you have my testimony before you, so rather than read to you, I'm just gonna very simply sum it up and make it very quickly. You know, law enforcement, first responds, public safety has changed a lot in the years that, you know, we have been, you know, providing Worker's Compensation, and there's a very large component of that in the State of Connecticut because of our nature, our terrain, our small town set up where there's volunteers that, you know, do the first responding, and specialized volunteers in places like Newtown where we have Newtown Underwater Search and Rescue. These people don't risk their lives any less than paid first responders, but because they're sort of different and came after the traditional firefighters and -- and EMS volunteers they've never been considered and written into Worker's Comp laws, yet they do risk their lives, and they do provide a valuable service. It's also an interesting thing that the scope of -- of this particular measure is pretty limited because of the specialization of this type of response team, so what I'm asking for today is to advance the bill, and to do a full fiscal analysis and actually get our arms around what the impact would be, but you know, in fairness a volunteer responder does not have somebody that collectively bargains for them, so it's -- you know, my responsibility to bargain for my constituents and just explore the possibility of moving forward with this inclusion for people that risk their lives to save others, and that's pretty much the whole thing in a nutshell.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Well, thank you for giving us that brief summary. Your constituents should be very pleased and proud to have you representing them because you have been quite consistent and persistent around this bill, so we are happy to have you here today to testify on the importance of it, and to actually bring light to the rest of the committee, and to not just your constituents but the citizens of the State of Connecticut as well. Any questions or concerns? Any comments?  
Representative Wilson Pheanious.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Yes. I wonder if you have done any estimates at all on what the cost would be to just even your town to --

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Representative, I'm having a hard time hearing you.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Okay. I'm sorry.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Would you move a little closer? Thank you.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): I certainly will. I'm wondering whether you have any estimates as to what it would cost -- what the increase in Worker's Compensation rates in your town would be if this were undertaken by the legislature and you know virtually for all towns because this -- this would mean obviously an increase in the -- in the Worker's Compensation rate. I don't know whether that would somehow move these individuals into being employees in some way arguably, which would create another whole set of issues.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): That's a very, very good question, and actually, that's -- that's the primary portion of my ask here today. I think that if we

advanced us and order a fiscal impact study -- even though I refer to NUSAR as my local first response unit because Newtown's surrounded by lakes, and these people are in the water, you know, even in the middle of winter, you know, when -- when there are emergencies, but there are units like this and all over the state, but the scope is very limited, and anecdotally, when we speak to these responders, they say, well, it's not very widespread, but nobody's been able to put a quantifiable number on it, and I think the first step to this is to understand it, and understand it's scope, and see if it -- it, you know, fits within the purview of what we should explore or if we need to consider more -- you know deeply or sharper targeting, so your questions exactly be asked today.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Okay.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Once we understand it, then we should make our decision objectively about whether or not this is a -- you know, a benefit that -- that these folks both deserve and the state can afford at this time.

REP. WILSON PHEANIOUS (53RD): Okay. Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative. Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Thank you. Good morning.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Good morning.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): So, when we had this bill last year, we heard pretty much the same testimony, and my question is within Newtown, does Newtown have an agreement with the entities that you and others seek to provide coverage for so that if there is an

instance where someone goes through the ice, is there a mutual aide agreement with this group and has the town researched the possibility of whether under that agreement for the period of time in which they are actually providing that service in that community their Worker's Comp policy would cover?

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): The -- the answer to your question is I'm not certain if there's a mutual aide agreement between the town and this volunteer organization. I do, however, know that there is active dialogue between this organization and our first selectman and our board of selectmen in towns, so our first selectman, Dan Rosenthal, actually is engaged in this process, and -- and supportive of us taking this to the next step, which is to actually, you know, put some numbers to this and see if it does make sense, and also being that it's not just for the local organization, to have this thing scoped and understand the statewide impact of -- you know, of this before we make a blanket proclamation.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): And, so lastly, line 17 of the bill as it's currently drafted appears to make these individuals employees of the state for purposes of receiving compensation --

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Senator, I can't hear you.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Line 17 of the bill appears to make these folks employees of the state for purposes of receiving compensation. Is it your intention that the state of Connecticut would be the provider of death benefits, disability benefits for any injury that occurs?

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Yes.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Thank you.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Yes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Or at least -- or at least to understand the impact of it first.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Senator. Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you so much for being here today and testifying on this issue. I think that it does require some thought and some consideration. I'm confident that everyone on the committee would agree that if someone is hurt while in the service of a municipality or the state -- even if they're in a volunteer capacity -- that we want to make sure that they are taken care of because they're first responders, and they're you know providing service for the people of Connecticut or a municipality, so I think -- but I think some of the questions that you've heard today from Senator Miner and from others -- Senator -- I mean Representative Wilson Pheanious -- they're good questions, and so I think it's an issue we need to know more about, and that we have a responsibility to get the answers to these questions, so we can address these folks fairly. So, thank you for bringing it forward.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Yes. Thank you -- thank you, Senator, and I -- I welcome the -- I welcome the -- the opportunity to -- you know, to work with the committee and with the, you know, OFA people to -- to actually, you know, get this thing into -- you know, into a point where we can make an intelligent decision, and hopefully do the right thing for these people that risk their lives to save others.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and I do agree that we should be doing our due diligence, and I believe that through studying what you've put before us and having OFA supply the fiscal impact will lead us in that direction so we can make a well-informed decision. So, thank you again for being here, and thank you for your time today.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Thank you for raising the bill, and thank you for the conversation.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): And, I look forward to going further with it. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I'm sorry. Actually, Representative Hall has a question for you.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Okay.

REP. HALL (59TH): Thank you, Representative Bolinsky. Do you know if these search and rescue teams also support the state in helping if these instances happen in state parks? I know you mentioned that Newtown is surrounded by --

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Right.

REP. HALL (59TH): Several lakes. The question is do these volunteer search and rescue teams, both the K-9 and the underwater, do they support the state with regard to these efforts as well?

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): You know what, the -- the lakes that are in question that they work on are state lakes.

REP. HALL (59TH): Okay. They're state lakes.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Yes. So, the statement is -  
- I mean they are first responders.

REP. HALL (59TH): Right.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): In a specialized situation,  
and I don't -- I don't think that when they enter  
the water they worry about whether or not it's --  
it's a town's water or if it's -- if it's --

REP. HALL (59TH): No. Not -- [Crosstalk]. I  
wasn't suggesting that at all. I'm just thinking in  
terms of where the Worker's Compensation coverage  
should come from, right, so the question whether or  
not it should be the town's Worker's Comp coverage,  
right, or the state's Worker's Comp coverage because  
they would have to file it through some mechanism,  
and so that's the question I was -- I was asking.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Yeah. See, I don't -- I  
don't know if I -- that's part of the due diligence  
--

REP. HALL (59TH): Right.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): I think we need to see. I'm  
-- by no means, am I a -- a Worker's Compensation  
expert.

REP. HALL (59TH): Sure.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): And -- and I want to know  
more.

REP. HALL (59TH): Absolutely.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): And, I want to know that  
we're doing the right thing and we're doing it in  
the right way. I would think that the most  
economical way to do it would be to, you know,  
attach the liability to the larger pool as opposed

to, you know, creating a new pool for Worker's Compensation, you know, for a six-member crew of volunteers that exist in Basra, or --

REP. HALL (59TH): Right.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Or Newtown for that matter. That in and of itself would probably make this a pretty unaffordable proposition, so -- and I think that's -- I think that's the reason why my first selectman is a supporter but hasn't actually opened the door to it from a municipal standpoint.

REP. HALL (59TH): Absolutely.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): So, we -- if we understand it better, then we've got the basis by which to find the optimal way to do it both from a protection standpoint and from a -- you know, a reasonableness of cost standpoint.

REP. HALL (59TH): Thank you.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative, again, and have a blessed day.

REP. BOLINSKY (106TH): You too. Thank you very much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Up next, we have Chris Herd, CEMA, testifying on Senate Bill 354, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NEW GREEN DEAL IN CONNECTICUT.

CHRIS HERD: Good morning. My name is Chris Herd. I am the President of the Connecticut Energy Marketer's Association. We represent approximately 600 family-owned home heating on propane dealers in Connecticut. Our gasoline members own, operate, and distribute 1.6 billion gallons of gasoline to about

1200 gas stations in the state. I'm here in opposition to Senate Bill 354, and I'm not here opposing it because we are against clean green renewable fuel. I'm against it because of the suggestion in the bill that electricity can accomplish that goal. One thing that the Labor Committee may want to appreciate is that our members today have been over a number of years transitioning from traditional home heating oil and diesel fuel to bio-diesel blended fuel, which can achieve carbon neutrality without any of the costs that it would take to move this bill over a number of decades. We have solutions that we can deliver today, lower emissions today without burdening rate payers.

So, I just want to -- I submitted written testimony. This bill does a lot, so I want to cover a lot of ground in a short period of time. First of all --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. I'm just gonna ask you to pause for one second. I want to put my hands on your written testimony, if you don't mind.

CHRIS HERD: Sure.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you.

CHRIS HERD: We also include pretty pictures -- the back.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I was just told there's a pretty picture on it.

CHRIS HERD: Yeah. It was my 16-year-old's idea.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Please proceed.

CHRIS HERD: Great. So, first of all, the bill would eliminate the people that we represent -- those 600-owned heating oil and propane dealers,

along with the 1400 gasoline retailers in Connecticut who have done business here for over a century. We have invested in these properties. We are -- we are the fabric -- part of the fabric of many communities that you -- virtually every community in Connecticut. Without any government intervention, we've reduced the consumption of heating fuel from 1200 gallons to 700 gallons over the last four decades, and that continues to decline rapidly as new technologies are introduced. We spend millions of dollars every year as an industry looking to bring higher-efficiency equipment to market so that it can accommodate these new renewable fuels.

The bill describes that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection transitioned from a free, fair, and competitive marketplace in the heating and transportation sectors to electric utility monopolies. Eliminating family businesses who compete with these utilities destroys competition and consumer choice. You're talking about one provider of all energy to everybody in every way that it is consumed. Electricity has been the most expensive source of energy in Connecticut for decades. Just to let you know, electric resistant heat on a per gallon equivalency to home heating oil today is \$8 dollars a gallon. Imagine telling your constituents to heat their homes it will cost them \$8 dollars per gallon equivalency to the other fuels that they may be using today. Compared to propane and natural gas, that number may be even -- may have a wider disparity, so just to drive that home. That's an important point to be made. There will be a significant cost to homeowners in Connecticut. We believe it will have a

disproportionate impact on fixed-income and low-income families. Rate payers are burdened for paying for electric utility infrastructure investments. This committee is probably not as familiar with that way that that works, but this bill would exponentially increase rates that homeowners and businesses would have to pay to transition to an all-electric economy. Again, rate payers are responsible for every penny of infrastructure that is built in Connecticut. This would require billions of dollars in new clean generation, upgrades in the distribution system. The current blinds that electricity runs through cannot accommodate the amount of electricity that it would take to put EVs and electric heat pumps in people's homes; therefore, all those costs get shifted back to rate payers.

New England has warned Connecticut a number of times over the last five or ten years that the grid is fragile and that brownouts and blackouts may occur if new generation does not come online. How would the grid handle a total conversion of electric heat and electric vehicles? What is the cost to rate payers again? And, the question -- the questions -- without the questions with clear answers, there are dire consequences. For instance, Millstone will go offline eventually. They provide anywhere from 30 to 40 percent of Connecticut's power in any given day. Once that goes offline, that requires additional clean zero-emissions energy to go online. The cost to abandon natural gas and electric generation -- what provides our state with nearly half of our power on any given day -- it fluctuates -- will burden rate payers for years to come, which granted costs if we were to move to electricity in

the same way that deregulation did for those of you who were around when we did that. less than seven years ago, the General Assembly adopted natural gas conversion expansion plans that resulted in tens of thousands of people just recently and continue to convert to natural gas. This bill would require them to change fuels again because the government, again, is once again picking winners and losers in the energy space. Even though I don't believe it, there is an appreciable environmental benefit to that. The cost of upgrading electric distribution system to build zero-emission -- zero-emissions generation to accommodate this all electric economy, again, would cost billions of dollars.

Energy diversity shields Connecticut from failure -- Cyber attacks. When the power goes out -- it wasn't that long ago that when the power went out thousands of Connecticut residents have it. If it goes out in an all-electric economy, now we can't charge our vehicles, we can't get to to work, it halts commerce. At least, with gasoline generator backups, we were able to still move about the state, deliver products and goods even when the power was out. If we go to all electricity, you have to consider the consequences of that.

Finally, what is really the -- the change we can make if a bill like this were to pass? Well, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports that even if the entire United States were to stop emitting carbon, it would only change -- it would only affect temperature by 0.80 Celsius by 2050 because of the new coal generation that's coming in China and India. I know I'm out of time. I would love to hear questions. But, this gives you a really clear -- this is -- my 16-year-old idea.

This gives you a really clear picture of what it would cost a home in Connecticut -- an average home in Connecticut to convert to an all-electric economy as this bill suggests.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and I do thank you for that very in-depth and informative testimony around the piece that you're honing in on, and it is a very comprehensive bill indeed. We have brought it through the Labor Committee with concentration on the workforce piece -- the apprenticeship piece, and making sure that as we transition into a new and clean energy-efficient state -- a green state, that those things are taken into consideration, that we are doing our due diligence as the Labor co-chairs to make sure that that is part of what's being discussed in the New Green Deal, so you are absolutely correct when you say that much of what you just spoke about is one) not our wellhouse. I'll be the first to admit that, but I just want to put on the record that it's in this committee because of the Labor piece that's in that, and I open the floor to any committee member that has any questions or concerns about what you just stated. Representative Joe Polletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Thank you. My first question of the morning. [Clearing throat]. Can biodiesel achieve carbon neutrality? Is that possible?

CHRIS HERD: Absolutely. So, there are a number of national studies that have been done. Just to let you know, biodiesel is a -- is a product that has a near B2 equivalency to traditional diesel or heating oil, so there's not much of an energy loss between the two fuels. Biodiesel is made right here in New Haven, Connecticut. It is the largest biodiesel

production facility on the East Coast. It makes about 40 million gallon today with plans to ramp up to higher volumes in the future. That biodiesel is made in Connecticut from used cooking grease, so we literally -- we have members of ours go to McDonalds and Dunkin' Donuts, and the LOB cafeteria and gather up all of that used cooking grease, and we bring it to a manufacturing facility that turns it into useable fuel. In very high concentrations, biodiesel has the ability to achieve carbon neutrality. In some studies, it shows with a brand-new fuel that is coming online called ethyl levulinate. It can actually have a negative carbon output because of sequestration.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): And, that would be like from the grease traps at the local places and you -- and you actually reuse them?

CHRIS HERD: Listen, I'm eating as many french-fries and cheeseburgers as possible to do my part to create as (inaudible - 01:08:38) as possible.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): [Laughing].

CHRIS HERD: I really believe in clean fuel. I'm all in.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): And, also -- and thank you for your answer. Also, are there any other states that have enacted anything like this proposal?

CHRIS HERD: Absolutely not that I'm aware of. Not that I'm aware of.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Okay. All right. Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any further comments or questions? Yes. Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): About biofuels. I've been told -- and I'd like to check it with you -- that if you add 10 percent biofuel to heating oil, it burns cleaner than natural -- than natural gas.

CHRIS HERD: That is correct, and I'll be specific. From NOX SOx particulate carbon dioxide/carbon monoxide standpoint, any -- about a seven percent blend of biodiesel with ultra-low sulfur heating oil is cleaner than natural gas from all those criteria pollutant measurements, but I will say that is not good enough anymore. With a 45 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emission law on the books in Connecticut and an 80 percent reduction by 2050, seven percent is not good enough. Our plan is to get to blend levels that will deliver on that carbon neutrality that I spoke about.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): And, you believe biodiesel -- biofuels can ramp up to the point where there's enough?

CHRIS HERD: Yes. Absolutely. Right now, there is definitely enough production domestically in the United States. Like I said, right here in Connecticut, if we were to use everything that was just made here in Connecticut, that would be a 10 percent blend. There is obviously where the other feedstock besides used cooking grease is soybeans and canola. That's the vast majority of what's -- what is produced nationally, and that's obviously out in the Midwest. We do get railcars from the Midwest that bring that. When we measure these fuels -- I just want to make an important point -- we measure them from a lifecycle analysis standpoint, so that means from the point of production, not just what happens at the burner tip

-- from where the fuel comes from, so if we cut down palm trees in Malaysia, that's not a good biofuel. We -- so, we only want to talk about fuels that are close to us that when measured from a lifecycle analysis they have a low-carbon intensity from the production point, transportation, and ultimately when they're combusted.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): I know Gottier Fuels in my district burns a 10 percent blend. I know they have to go down to New Haven with their own tanker to pick up the fuel. Do you envision a biofuels pipeline at some point?

CHRIS HERD: Well, absolutely. We are -- there is actually the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection last year were compelled by law to -- to look into a program that we believe would build additional storage and blending infrastructure in parts of Connecticut like your district where it does not exist. That -- those sorts of things exist in the major terminals in New Haven, Bridgeport, and New London. We think that we're very close and with -- hopefully, with Representative Abercrombie's help, we're gonna get it over the top this year, and be able to start building that infrastructure so he does not have to send those tractor trailers down. And, again, we do measure the diesel fuel that it takes to get down there and back into our carbon calculation. Unfortunately, DEP turns their back to that. They only look at the burner tip emissions, so if we can get that blending to happen right in your district, that would be an extreme benefit to the environment, it would lower the carbon intensity of the fuel.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): And, finally, for the record, could you explain the difference between propane and natural gas?

CHRIS HERD: Propane is a wonderful fuel. It is a beneficial biproduct of natural gas, so when they -- when they extract natural gas, propane is part of what happens in that process. We do have the president of the New England Propane Gas Association is here, and I'm sure she could really school you on that -- on why it's so good, but it is -- it is a -- it is unlike natural gas when it leaks, and according to the Sierra Club -- a recent study by the Sierra Club 313 metric tons of methane leak in Hartford alone per year. Just to give you perspective, that's almost 117,000 gallons of heating oil pouring down Capitol Avenue over a year's time. Just because you can't see natural gas, doesn't mean it's good. Propane -- unlike natural gas, propane does not leak into the atmosphere. It does not rise. It's a heavy fuel, so it -- if in the event that it does escape, which it doesn't happen very often, it's not something that gets into the atmosphere and contributes to climate change. So, again, just in Hartford alone -- and think about your own districts -- if 117,000 gallons of heating oil was leaking, you'd do something about it, and unfortunately, the legislation we've asked for the last four years has not gotten over the top. We've just been outmuscled on that one.

REP. WOOD (141ST): Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative. Any further comments or questions? I just have one, and I think you did state it, and I wanted to just write

it down. The savings that you had spoken of earlier in your testimony around what you've been able to do around energy efficiency?

CHRIS HERD: Oh, yeah. So, over the last four decades, we've been able to reduce heating oil consumption from 1200 gallons to under 700 gallons. That continues to move really quick. Once upon a time, we didn't have heating equipment on the liquid fuel side that would reach efficiencies of 95 percent. Those are in the market now, and they continue to push the upper limits. The cleaner our fuel gets, the higher efficiency of the equipment we can have, so it has been a real push by our industry to achieve those -- those goals. They are now today a reality, and one thing I will promise you is the liquid fuels industry that is vastly delivered by family businesses in Connecticut will continue to get cleaner with these renewable fuels and these new technologies that are coming online. Billions of dollars of infrastructure upgrades is not required to get a clean burning fuel.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Well, thank you very much for your testimony. It has been quite enlightening for me. Where would you say percent wise we are?

CHRIS HERD: With biodiesel ones? So, we -- we hired the University of Connecticut School of Engineering about five years ago to do -- to actually go out and physically take samples, and at that time, it showed we were at about seven percent blend. That study is taking place again starting this month, and it will go on for 12 months, so next session, we will report to you where we stand. In the meantime -- like I said, we can't wait. We need to start to implement strategies. I hope that DEEP

has been convinced by the leadership in the Energy Committee that that thermal renewable energy credit program can get the -- the type of infrastructure needed to blend everywhere because we sell fuel in every town in Connecticut, so it's not good enough just to have it in New Haven, Bridgeport, New London.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely. I agree. And, with that being seven percent, what is the goal?

CHRIS HERD: The goal?

REP. PORTER (94TH): Yes.

CHRIS HERD: Is to reach carbon neutrality, so it's -- eventually, it will be 100. I believe my children will burn a biodiesel 100 blend -- 100 percent biodiesel and no blend at all. I think that that's where it will eventually go, and I think that it can be achieved in a relatively short period of time.

REP. PORTER (94TH): That was my last question. So, in a relatively small amount of time?

CHRIS HERD: Yeah, so I will say that the infrastructure piece right now is the part -- the hurdle that we have to get over. The signals that the State of Connecticut has sent with the natural gas conversion plan has made some people who have invested -- traditionally invested in our industry a little nervous putting more money in if the natural gas conversion plan continues. Natural gas -- like 90 something percent of natural gas is methane. Methane, according to EPA, is 87 times more potent at trapping greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide. Even though we are very focused on carbon dioxide. If we could get to the point where -- where the

signals that are being sent from DEEP to the people who invest in our infrastructure can be alleviated, not being scared that the next -- the next energy vogue, which is electricity isn't going to threaten this industry, I think that we will attract those dollars back --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Gotcha.

CHRIS HERD: And, it will help those families get there for ya.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Gotcha. Thank you so much. Have a good day.

CHRIS HERD: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Okay. Next up, we have Monika Nugent, AFT, testifying on Senate Bill 348, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE REGARDING THE STATE WORKFORCE AND RETIRING EMPLOYEES. Monica, you have the floor?

MONIKA NUGENT: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome.

MONIKA NUGENT: Good morning, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Representative Hall, Representative Polletta, and members of the Labor and Public Employees' Committee. My name is Monika Nugent. I'm joined here by Todd Birch, and we are steering committee members of Managerial and Exempt Employees United, an association of AFT Connecticut. Just for the record, we are managerial employees of the state, but we have taken personal leave time to come to testify before you today. We are here in support of Senate Bill 348, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE REGARDING THE STATE WORKFORCE AND RETIRING EMPLOYEES. You have testimony before you

that we have submitted, but I will quickly summarize.

Senate Bill 348 ask this committee to establish a task force to look at the many inequities and barriers to recruitment that the state Managerial and Exempt Workforce face in light of the retirement cliff that's approaching in 2022. In the last 10 to 15 years, managerial employees have faced numerous issues that have led the managerial work class to feel undervalued, overworked, with the added perception that leaders of the state are not concerned with or respect the managerial class. There have been three major issues that managerial workforce employees have faced.

First, salary compression and inversion. In the past 10 to 15 years -- or in the past six years specifically, managers have not received a merit raise or a cost-of-living adjustment. In addition to the lack of raises, we have been asked to increase our contributions both for seers and insurance, as well as now the added FMLA contribution that unionized employees are not paying. This has led to compression in the salaries and also inversion in salaries, so inversion is when the managers are overseeing employees who make significantly more than the managers do.

Second, is the lack of succession planning, and the trouble with recruiting into the managerial workforce. With a large number of retirements that are anticipated in 2020, executive branch agencies have started to do succession plans. However, they are running into barriers into recruiting members to come into the managerial work class. Existing staff do not ant to take on the added pressures and the

added work of a manager and to oversee employees without the protections and the benefits of being in a collective bargaining agreement. Without the proper planning and recruitment in 2020, quite literally all of the institutional knowledge will be walking out the door with no one to fill those positions.

Lastly, training and professional development are severely lacking and almost nonexistent for the managerial work class. Over the last ten years, the manager's training program has been stripped out of DAS, and currently, there is no training program for new managers. In addition, there are no professional development opportunities for managers or exempt employees including conferences or meetings because of budgetary constraints.

In conclusion, MNE and AFT believe that a study should be conducted to look at these issues and to provide a roadmap of what to do in 2022. The study in the subsequent report is vital to continue the services that are provided for public safety and health and human services, and other general governmental functions so that they can continue uninterrupted. Thank you so much for your time, and we'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any comments or questions? Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): I remember a managerial group within the old Connecticut State Employees' Association. Why did you decide to join AFT?

MONIKA NUGENT: So, in the 1970s, there was another group called AMECSS, which stood for the Association of Managerial Employees' in Connecticut's State

Service. From that time, there was a major drop off in members, and so at some point the switch was decided to be made from CSEA to AFT, and since we've made that switch, we've close to tripled their membership.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative.  
Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you for testifying. I'm also on Appropriations, and we've been concerned about and heard a lot of comments about the potential for massive retirements in a couple years, and that we're not prepared for that, and so I appreciate your testimony here today. I do think that proposing a study of this will help us to understand the scope of the problem, and you know, it -- it doesn't seem right to me that inversion that you spoke of. I don't think that -- I don't know where that serves -- how that serves the state in terms of really making sure that we have the best workforce and the best morale. I'm sure that it's very difficult. We've heard of this in other nonunion employees had come before us just over the last hearing, and it was a similar situation where they were hit with the increases but not the benefits of the salary increases, but increases in contributions to benefits without getting the salary increases that offset that, so I think you raised some good issues here, and appreciate you coming to testify today.

MONIKA NUGENT: Thank you very much, Senator.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and I'll just echo the sentiments of the Senator, and we will

definitely be taking a closer look at this because a study would absolutely give us what we need in order to be well informed when moving forward on how -- how to address this issue. It is very concerning the numbers that we're gonna be losing, and that will not only impact people's life and their lifestyles, but it will also impact the state as a whole on our economy and the loss of a tremendous amount of revenues when it comes to dollars, so thank you so much for putting a voice and a face to this issue today.

MONIKA NUGENT: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, congratulations on that beautiful baby girl.

MONIKA NUGENT: [Laughing]. Thank you very much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. All right. Up next, we have Leslie Anderson, PGANE, testifying on 354, and that would be AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT.

LESLIE ANDERSON: Good morning. I also submitted testimony prior to this that you should have in your notes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. I'm going to ask you just to either move a little closer to the mic or pull the mic a little closer to you.

LESLIE ANDERSON: How's this?

REP. PORTER (94TH): That's better. Give me your outside voice. Okay.

LESLIE ANDERSON: All righty.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you.

LESLIE ANDERSON: Good morning. My name is Leslie Anderson. I am the President of the Regional Alternative Energy Association and the Propane Gas Association of New England. We represent the six New England states, and I traveled down from Maine, where I live, this morning to speak with you here in Connecticut. We have over 109 propane storefronts throughout the state of Connecticut, and over 2500 employees that are currently working in our industry, and we exist to promote the youth and education of propane, as well as safety and public awareness, and you can contact me if you ever have anyone call you with a problem with propane, and I will help you to find a solution to that.

One of the things I'd like to talk to you about is how propane furthers the fundamental environmental goal to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Most people do not realize that propane is not a traditional fossil fuel. Propane is a beneficial byproduct of natural gas processing. About five percent of natural gas on average ends up having a portion left over that is captured and that is propane. If the propane is not captured and it is beneficially used to offset another energy source, it's simply burned off. It's wasted energy. From that perspective, I think one could easily argue that it's carbon neutral, but the importance for Connecticut's energy strategy is that we use this underutilized resource instead of letting it be wasted because over half of our energy today for electricity comes from natural gas, and in the folders we mailed out, and I have folders I'll pass to the clerk to give you later, I've got a graph showing the energy usage in Connecticut, and this is for 2018, and it's based on the (inaudible - 01:25:24) New England site, and it shows you that

over half of it is natural gas, and if we're using that natural gas, we should be doing something with the beneficial resource associated with it, and there's an abundance of it in the world today because so much of our country is switching to natural gas. So much of our coal and our nuclear plants are moving to natural gas because it's less expensive and because it's much cleaner depending on what it's replacing, and so now we have more that we need of it out there, so it's important that we use it for that -- for that reason. There's also a move to create renewable propane, so we don't want to stifle the innovation and use of propane because they're researching ways they can make renewable propane from algae, and it's also a biproduct. You get a small percentage from biodiesel as well, which you heard, and today, they are producing renewable propane that's being used in California and in Europe in small quantities that's being made from biodiesel, and Louisiana is the closest location that has any volume of it today, but we don't really need to even get to renewable yet because we still got all this extra propane that's out there that needs to be used.

So, my last two points that I'll make to go through is that it's really important that we look at a lifecycle analysis. The source energy for propane compared to electricity here in New England is one to two, so you're using half as much source energy with propane than you are for electricity, and electricity units you can't just look at a heat pump and say it's zero emissions at your house. You have to look at how that electricity was produced, the energy to get the natural gas to put into the plant that made the energy to begin with, and then how it

gets to your home because you lose about 70 percent of it over the wires until it gets to your house for that energy, and then you also need to look at the infrastructure. We count our trucks that we use and our other delivery methods in our source energy calculations, and the electric industry does not do that. The transformers that they have contain an insulator that escapes that's called SF 6, which is the most potent greenhouse gas out there, and when there's releases of that, it goes into the atmosphere, and it depletes our ozone layer. Propane does not have any ozone depleting chemicals in it. It's made up of hydrogen and carbon --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. I'm just gonna -- I'm gonna interrupt you 'cause I'm going to actually ask the question --

LESLIE ANDERSON: Sure.

REP. PORTER (94TH): That will probably allow you to continue along that track, and I just want you to really speak to -- you've talked about some of the benefits of propane versus what we're -- we're currently using. Can you -- in layman's terms -- just speak to people that don't have a lot of knowledge around this on why it is important that we get this done sooner than later.

LESLIE ANDERSON: I -- I think it's important because we're moving to look at the way we can reduce our carbon admissions in our state, but we're doing that by saying that we're going to make everything electric and renewable, but we don't look at the renewable energy that we have and how we're gonna store it and keep it there, and if you're using solar and you partner with propane, you can get a zero-emission house for that, but if you turn

to something like battery storage so that you have power at night when the sun is not shining, you're really looking at bringing in toxic materials for your batteries that are not good for the environment. You know, we don't want to reduce the global warming and the contaminate the ground water at the same time. You know, cobalt is not renewable. Lithium is not renewable. And, we are assuming now that we're gonna make these electric cars, but where are we making the electric cars. If we're making them in China, and their steel is being produced by a coal-powered plant that's producing more emission in a poor country than we have here so that we can then have something that we think is going to be clean where we are, the overall picture is not really being looked at, so I think it's really critical that whatever solution comes into play has many diverse resilient energies associated with it, so we're not gonna have energy security issues, but it also is looking at the lifecycle analysis of each energy source. If you don't look at the whole amount of energy that goes into each type of equipment, then we could actually be producing more greenhouse gas emissions by switching to electricity than we would today if we were using propane for that.

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, I think that's a great segue into my next question because you bring up, you know, China, and our concern here with the Labor Committee is the transitioning of these jobs as we create clean and renewable energy, the thousands of really skilled workers with great jobs paying great benefits and salaries; can you just speak to -- if you can -- any concerns or suggestions that you may have in regards to making a smooth transition and

making sure that we build out and education our -- our students so that we're building a bench in order to fulfil this need as we move more and more into renewable energy?

LESLIE ANDERSON: I think that's very important in our industry, and many others are struggling right now to find skilled labor because not everybody -- you know, the majority of our jobs in our future do not require college education to complete those jobs. There's lots of really good trade jobs out there for -- for green industries and work that you can do either in home delivery or through servicing those appliances and putting in this equipment that pay extremely well, and it's hard for us to find skilled workers for that, so we've been working with the different states in our footprint to try to coordinate so that the students know the different options that are out there, so you're just not graduating with huge student loans and no jobs when there might be a great technical job that's available for you that you can get, and I think it's really important that we not only look at the workers in our own state, but we look at how our energy choices affect workers around the world, you know. And, there's a lawsuit right now where they're suing Tesla and other manufacturers of these batteries because there's so much child labor that is being used to get the cobalt in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo where you have people that are digging their own holes and going down into unsafe mines, and they're getting injured, they don't have help, they don't have safety, you've got environmental contamination from the mine tailings. You know, I -- I worked for two years at the Department of Environmental Protection in the

State of Maine, and we were fighting mining in our state in Maine. We didn't want to issue new mining permits, and yet, now we're looking at energy policies that are promoting mines in some of the most disadvantaged communities of color and low income globally around the world, so I think we need to really be careful about what we're doing to get our materials for -- for reducing climate change and making sure it's not impacting so disproportionately in other countries, and in bigger context, globally causing more pollution on our planet.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I absolutely agree, and I think that also ties back into the fact that we should be taking care of the communities here at home who have been disproportionally impacted, and that we really do need to make sure that we have -- which this bill doesn't address, an environmental justice component for the communities, right, that have suffered I mean to the extreme. When I think about communities in districts such as mine where we have such a high percentage of -- of people but especially children with asthma, and how all of this is related, and it all goes back to education. It goes back to apprenticeship programs. It goes back to training. It goes back to making sure that we have a skilled and knowledgeable labor force that is ready to go as we, you know, open the door to these jobs, and also just making sure, again, that the skilled workers that are currently in these positions are not displaced, that they're not going to be future unemployment benefactors, and that we will absolutely not disrupt their livelihood and their lifestyle, so I'm gonna open it up to the committee for any comments or questions. Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Yes. Did I understand you correctly you said that there's a loss in transmission of as much as 85 percent?

LESLIE ANDERSON: As much as 66 to 70 percent for electricity by the time it's produced at the powerplant until it gets to your house depending on how far away you are from it, but that includes the electricity that's lost on the powerlines, and it also includes the electricity that's lost because of the -- the getting the fuel to the plant itself and then producing the fuel at that plant, so the energy that they use to actually produce the fuel as well. Then, you calculate that all in. If you started at 100 for your energy, by the time it gets to your house, you'd be at about 33 for -- for electricity.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Okay. So, you're saying the cost -- energy cost to get it to the plant -- the fuel --

LESLIE ANDERSON: Yes.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): And, then the fuel burns roughly -- well, in Connecticut, of course, half our power comes from nuclear, but if we're talking about a gas-power plant, maybe two-thirds of the power -- of the gas actually gets out of the building, and then you're talking about 13, 14, 15 percent maximum loss in transmission itself, and you add those together, and you think it comes close to 85 percent.

LESLIE ANDERSON: It's not 85. I think it's closer to 66 to 70 percent that you're losing.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Oh, I'm sorry.

LESLIE ANDERSON: Yeah. And, that's based on data that's come from the national gas companies --

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Right.

LESLIE ANDERSON: On how much power they lose from -- from the gas until it gets to the home.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): So, did I hear you correctly at 85 percent during your presentation?

LESLIE ANDERSON: No. No. Sixty-six to 70 percent is what it is.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Okay.

LESLIE ANDERSON: It's not 85 percent.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): All right. Now, so the complete combustion of propane -- so you take three propane molecules and five O<sub>2</sub> molecules and you burn it and you get five water molecules -- I'm sorry. Four water molecules, but you get three carbon dioxide molecules. So, I don't understand how propane burns without creating carbon dioxide.

LESLIE ANDERSON: It's a low-carbon burning fuel. It does produce a small amount of carbon dioxide, but in comparison to the amount that's produced at the end from a propane furnace like I have at my house, my overall carbon impact is much less than it would be than if I was using electric heat pump. When you look at the -- all of the carbon emissions associated with each of those processes.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Boy, if you could provide that data --

LESLIE ANDERSON: Yeah.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): I'd appreciate it. The data that was sent to me compares propane to wood burning, not to natural gas or -- or nuclear, so if you could provide those numbers for me or for all of us, we'd appreciate it.

LESLIE ANDERSON: Yeah. Yeah. I'll be happy to do that. The -- the wood burning for propane is one of the things that our industry is doing around the world to reduce carbon emissions, so we've partnered with countries like India and Brazil and Nigeria where we're moving people from burning solid fuels like wood and coal and animal dung to moving clean and to using clean energy, and propane is the one that they use because it's easily transportable, and you can put a lot of it into a small tank and move it, and it is being used today to combat the world's greatest health threat, which is the three-billion people that are cooking with these solid fuels and are exposed to the health effects from them because they don't have chimneys and different things, so they're breathing in all these contaminants in their living places, and it's causing childhood asthma, and -- and lots of other health effects like that, and so we've been working to reduce that carbon need around the world by moving people to a clean fuel and moving them out of energy poverty to a clean fuel -- propane, and it's also reducing deforestation, so when we move 50 families from using wood, some of the families they spend six hours a day -- the women and the children -- gathering wood so that they can feed their families and use it for their energy source. When you move them to propane, it not only changes their lives and lets young girls go to school instead of gathering wood every day, but it also reduces the health

impacts that are associated, and if you can get 50 families to move in the tropic, you can save an acre of rainforest, and so actively around the world we're using propane to try to overall reduce carbon emissions in this way.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): In Connecticut, would you agree that nuclear produces less carbon dioxide than propane?

LESLIE ANDERSON: Absolutely.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative. Any further comments or questions from the committee? I'm seeing none. We'd like to thank you for your testimony and time today. Next up, we will have Jim Lohr with Carpenters' Management testifying on Senate Bill 354, GREEN NEW DEAL, and 5386, AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ISSUANCE OF A STOP-WORK ORDER. You have the floor.

JIM LOHR: Thank you, Representative Porter, Senator Kushner, members of the committee. My name is Jim Lohr. I'm the Deputy Director of the North Atlantic States Carpenters' Labor Management Program, a coalition of approximately 2000 contractors and more than 30,000 union carpenters throughout the six states of New England and most of New York State. I'm here today to testify in support of House Bill 5386, AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ISSUANCE OF STOP-WORK ORDER.

Over the past 25 years, union contractors and union carpenters have been at the forefront of fighting payroll and tax fraud in the Connecticut construction industry. In the mid-1990s, a study done by the University of Connecticut economics

professor, William Albert, estimated that Connecticut taxpayers lost more than \$500-million dollars alone because of the practice of employee misclassification where employees are called independent contractors. The \$500-million dollar total estimate was based on the law state income tax, federal income tax, unemployment insurance, and Worker's Compensation premiums that were not paid because of this type of payroll fraud in all industries.

This morning the United Brotherhood of Carpenters released a national study just focusing in on the construction industry. Nationally, an estimated that over \$8-billion dollars is lost because of this practice in the construction industry. Contractors, many from out of state, can lower their cost by around 30 percent if they commit payroll fraud by misclassifying their employees as independent contractors. They can save even more money by paying workers off the books or failing to pay them at all. So, there's an enormous incentive to cut costs to win a bid by breaking the law in the hypercompetitive construction industry. To address the problem with payroll fraud in the construction industry, we have supported laws to create criminal and civil penalties on both public and private jobs. We also supported the Private Right of Action Law, the Employee Misclassification Task Force in efforts to increase personnel enforcing these laws at both the Department of Labor and Revenue Services.

Back in 2007, we supported the passage of Public Act of 789, which established the Connecticut Stop-Work order provision under section 31-69a of the Connecticut General statutes. It was modeled after a Florida law enacted following several hurricanes

that brought in an influx of contractors to Florida who were working and paying their workers under the table to illegally cut costs.

This proposed bill would simply increase the civil penalty by \$500 dollars a day for failure to comply with a stop-work order. Other states such as New Jersey and California have much stronger penalties. This issue of disobeying the stop-work order first came to our attention several years ago when the state shut down an out-of-state contractor at an Apple store in Westfarms Mall for failure to comply with the Connecticut's Worker's Comp laws. At the time, a Hartford Business Journal story said, and I quote, "Don Shubert, President of the seat of Connecticut Construction Industry Association, pointed to an example earlier this year when the state shut down construction of an Apple store in Westfarms Mall after an inspection found five workers weren't covered by Worker's Compensation insurance. They realized then that the fines were simply not enough and that the fines need to be increased.

These work orders also use, not only in construction, but it's also used by the Department of Labor in other industries such as the human trafficking in the nail salon industry. The commissioner mentioned that last year, and I just mention to -- I'd be remiss not to mention Amazon. We had a case recently down at HQ2 in Northern Virginia that was in the Washington Post. I attached the article there regarding companies that misclassified their workers and paid them improperly on HQ2 down there in Northern Virginia, so it happens all over the country. It's happening with major employers like Amazon and Apple, and it's a

major issue for us in the industry, and we will be out the week of April 15, like we were in New Haven last year. Nationally, the Carpenter's Union dedicates a day where we get out and protest on this issue, so we appreciate that, and we hope people can attend that event.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and thank you for your testimony. I was doing my due diligence to keep up with you. You were moving kind of fast.

JIM LOHR: Sorry, I've heard this a lot.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Human trafficking -- I know. We're trying to beat that three-minute clock.

JIM LOHR: I understand.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I get it. I get it. But, you said human trafficking and what else was brought to our attention by DOL?

JIM LOHR: Well, the human trafficking in the nail salons.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Yes.

JIM LOHR: There was an article last year that the commissioner talked about. So, they used the stop-work orders there. That was -- when the bill was originally passed, we didn't think we were --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Right.

JIM LOHR: You know, we were just focusing on construction.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely.

JIM LOHR: But, there's other industries as well too

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for that. And, can you just speak to what it is that we as a state are losing? I mean what is the impact on the state if we don't do something to address this issue?

JIM LOHR: Well, the 1990 study estimated \$500 million if you added up all the lost Worker's Comp, Unemployment, Social Security, Federal and State Income Tax, and put those together. Like I said, I will share with you the national study that we just released this morning. I didn't have time to put that in my testimony, and I apologize because it was just released today, so I will share that with you as well too, but it just makes it really difficult if you are a business that plays by the rules and follows the rules, and it just makes it very, very tough if you have developers and owners out there who look the other way, and these companies come in with extremely low bids and part of the reason that they're able to underbid legitimate companies whether they're nonunion or union who are obeying the law to compete and win jobs, so.

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, I'm just listening to you, and it's also raising a concern in my mind, but I would rather hear from your mind as a person who deal with this much more than -- has much more knowledge around it than I do. Bringing in folks that are less qualified concerns me because aren't we putting workers at risk, not just the workers that are coming in, but the folks that they are working with in the State of Connecticut as well.

JIM LOHR: Absolutely, and we see that from time-to-time on jobs where somebody will actually get killed, you know, and it's not just -- you know, there were a couple of local examples that I'm

familiar with was down in Chelsea Piers you know when they were building Chelsea Piers several years ago, you know, and they were using undocumented workers and exploiting, paying them off the books, and one of the folks fell and died, Javier Salinas, who lived in Danbury. We just had a recent example down at the SoNo Mall in Norwalk. There was a company there -- same thing. A worker was killed as well too, so it's just unfortunate 'cause when you make a mistake in our industry, unlike other industries where hey the paperwork might be wrong or something like that, you know, it can result in death.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Wow.

JIM LOHR: That's why Worker's Compensation is so expensive in our industry, and that's why there is such an incentive to cheat. You know, years ago, we passed a program called the Worker's Compensation Premium Credits Program, which gives credits to employers, you know, that have higher pay in industries like ours, so.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Well, thank you for [Crosstalk] -- for making that mention, and my -- my condolences to Javier Salinas' family in Danbury that that was the outcome of what I consider to be something really unjust --

JIM LOHR: It happens. I mean it's a race to the bottom, and a lot of times when you're cutting corners on some of the things that we're doing --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Someone pays for that.

JIM LOHR: It's, you know -- it happens --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Someone pays for that.

JIM LOHR: In terms of safety. You know, the real strong companies really emphasize safety now, so you'll see that -- you know, if you go to shareholders meetings for some of these national industrial companies you know they'll talk about and brag about you know their safety rate and what they're doing in terms of addressing safety issues, you know, at their plants, and it's a moneymaker for them in terms of cutting down their Worker's Comp cost, but also you know in terms of boosting, you know, worker morale too.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely. Representative Rutigliano.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon, sir. How are you today?

JIM LOHR: Great to see you.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Good to see you. I feel like I've done Labor Committee for a few years now, that we -- we had this big discussion about this a couple years' back.

JIM LOHR: Yep.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): I don't know if that's Sally too, but just to refresh my memory -- are most of the staff work orders based on labor violations or sort of like on quality violations, like they're not building it correct?

JIM LOHR: No. The stop-work order is only addressing Worker's Comp, so it's just based on Worker's Comp. Other states have looked at other things as well too, but it's strictly Worker's Comp. You know, that for our industry that's such a big --

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Oh, yeah.

JIM LOHR: It's 30 -- for carpenters for instance, it's about \$30 dollars on every \$100 dollars of payroll for an employer, so that is a huge cost, and so there's such a built-in incentive. You know, if you can get around that, it just gives you such a competitive bidding advantage because, hey, maybe you'll pay people off the books, you'll pay them in cash, but you don't have to --

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Right.

JIM LOHR: So, we run into that with labor brokers, you know, who, you know, will bring up people and especially in someone with a subcontractors dry wall, you know, that kind of thing, so.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Right. So, that was my next question was the misclassification I'm fully with you for off the books.

JIM LOHR: Yep.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): I mean everybody has to pay taxes. I mean this is just completely unfair and outrageous, but when you say misclassification, does that mean that they're not designated as an employee?

JIM LOHR: Yep.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Or -- so --

JIM LOHR: Absolutely. So -- so, we'll see situations, for instance, you know, on a major commercial job where you'll have a bunch of drywallers, and they will be called independent contractors, and some of the companies will actually make them sign something saying, hey, they're an independent contractor. You know, that type of thing, but all the materials, when they have to

report to work, you know all the factors that they use in the test to determine --

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Right.

JIM LOHR: The difference between an employee and an independent contractor -- [Crosstalk]. Right.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Right.

JIM LOHR: So, you know, it -- you know, we're focused more on the commercial sector. You know, that's -- that's our bread and butter, and --

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Right.

JIM LOHR: That's our bailiwick. They are -- so you know when you see 10 or 15 drywallers, you know -- and they're "all independent contractors" so it -- there are legitimate independent contractors, you know, in the construction industry, so you know, that's --

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): I would think that --

JIM LOHR: That's a different situation.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): I would think that that 10 or 15 -- just my brain was like that's a subcontractor, and that -- whoever owns that company should be paying them.

JIM LOHR: Exactly. Exactly. Exactly. And, sometimes they don't. That's -- that's the problem, so.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): So, if they classify all 15 of them without a company as a subcontractor -- that means they get a 1099, right?

JIM LOHR: In theory --

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Potentially, they get a 1099?

JIM LOHR: They're supposed to. Yep.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): No. No. Let's go on the premise that all --

JIM LOHR: Right.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Off the books is illegal and wrong --

JIM LOHR: Right. Right.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): And, we should be against it no matter what.

JIM LOHR: Yep.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Do those people then when they get the 1099, do they make up for those taxes that you said were missing from our -- our basically our coffers of Social Security, and the -- and the income tax?

JIM LOHR: Well, I would say it depends on the circumstances, and I'll -- I'll get some more specific information on the tax stuff for you because I know there have been some studies done on this, but you know, I often times, you know, that there are ways that you don't report as much on the 1099s and there's issues there, so.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Okay. Well, we could definitely agree -- I would agree with you that it's a problem. I would agree with you that anyone not paying taxes or what they're supposed to do or pay their employees properly, I couldn't agree with you more, so.

JIM LOHR: Right.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Thank you very much.

JIM LOHR: Thank you. I appreciate it.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Thank you, Madam.

JIM LOHR: Thanks so much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Representative. Any further comments or questions? Ah, you jumped the gun, but you okay. Up next, we have Lisa Levy, Legal Services, testifying on 229, AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' RIGHTS. Good afternoon.

LISA LEVY: Good afternoon, Representative Porter, Senator Kushner, members of the Labor and Public Employees' Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify on behalf of language restricting covenants not to compete to be amended to Senate Bill 229, AAC Workers' Rights. As I think some of you know, I am an attorney at Greater Hartford Legal Aid. We represent low-wage workers, and the employment units of Connecticut's Legal Services programs, GHLA, Connecticut Legal Services, and New Haven Legal Assistance are all proposing that the language attached be amended to SB 229.

A noncompete covenant restricts an employee from business competition with a former employer by prohibiting the employee from engaging in a particular occupation or type of work for a defined time period and in a defined geographic area. Traditionally, the purpose of the noncompete covenant was to protect the employer's competitive advantage by preventing more highly trained and compensated employees from taking a job at a competing business, and disclosing specialized

knowledge or seals acquired at the former employer. In recent years, though, as we know, low-wage workers from janitors to home health aides to fast food workers have been required to sign covenants not to compete.

The U.S. Treasury in a 2016 report found that 18 percent of our workforce is subject to noncompete provisions. More recently, they found the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics from October 2019, a report from the Economic Policy Institute concluded that between 27.8 and 46.5 of private sector workers are subject to noncompete. Translating to between 36 and 60 million private sector workers. A notable portion of these workers are low-wage earners. Although, low-wage employees do not have specialized technical skills nor are they privy to trade secrets held by higher paid employees, in recent years, employers have forced increasing numbers of these workers to sign noncompete covenants. This has occurred with low-wage employees such as home health workers, certified nurse aides, commercial cleaners, and fast food workers. In a few minutes, you will be hearing from Ms. Sally Boal Wrang who is a personal care attendant. She will tell you her experience of having a noncompete and how it has detrimentally affected her.

In the -- excuse me. In the Economic Policy Institute 2019 report, more than a quarter -- 29 percent of surveyed employees whose employees average wage per hour is less than 13 dollars use noncompetes for their workers. Now, less than a \$13 dollar per hour wage translates to a worker earning no more than \$27,019 dollars annually. In addition --

REP. PORTER (94TH): I'm just gonna ask you to wrap up.

LISA LEVY: Yes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Please. Thank you.

LISA LEVY: Okay. So, our bill most importantly supports restricting noncompetes to bar noncompetes for those workers who earn less than twice the minimum wage. That is at present -- the minimum wage --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Twenty-two dollars.

LISA LEVY: It is \$11 dollars an hour, so that would be \$22 or \$22 dollars and 1 cent, and that is our request, and we ask this committee to follow the trend of many of our sister states who have similarly restricted noncompetes from impeding low-wage workers.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you.

LISA LEVY: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, thank you for your testimony. If I continue in the conversation that Mr. Luciano started earlier today -- this morning, the more I hear about this [laughing] the more baffled and disgusted I get. You are now adding to that home healthcare workers -- I'm sorry. What were the others? I think there were two other categories you mentioned.

LISA LEVY: So, there were home healthcare workers and those can either be unlicensed, uncertified workers who provide personal care or they can also be certified nurse aides who are certified by the State of Connecticut. They can provide care in a

home or in a facility. There are agencies which hire them and then place them in different types of facilities. Our fact sheet mentions a true-life scenario involving the CNAs for precluded from working at another facility because of a noncompete agreement, and also the fast food workers. We have the Jimmy Johns agreement if this committee wants it. We have that.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely. We want it.  
[Laughing].

LISA LEVY: Also, the committee should be aware that in regard to personal care attendants, there was a Connecticut Superior Court case where the -- I believe it was called Kulage [phonetic]. I can find it after the -- the testimony, provide you a copy of it where the court found that a two-year noncompete -- I'm sorry. It may have been a one-year noncompete but it was a very broad noncompete for a personal care attendant who was a low-wage worker, precluded her from basically finding a job at another business or agency that did -- in which you would have to do the same work.

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, I'm just curious I mean is there any parameters that are stipulated around these agreements that you're referring to with -- with regard to proximity to the employer to have imposed it in relation to an employer that they're looking to work for. Like, is there a certain amount of miles you have to be within -- how -- I'm just trying to understand what are some of the stipulations around these agreements that are being placed on low-wage workers?

LISA LEVY: Well, if you look at the case law involving workers in general, the case law uses the

same standard, which is a reasonableness standard to determine whether there is a reasonable restriction on restraint of employment or an unreasonable restriction, and some of the factors they look at are, as you mentioned, geographic limitation, the duration of the restriction that is -- is it one year, two years more, the amount of restriction upon the type of work that the employee is -- is trained to do or wants to do, and the amount of imposition on the employer -- at the former employer, so they look at these factors, and then there's looking at the public policy, and the court in the Kulage case said you know we think there are public policy problems with basically restraining -- they weren't looking at the employee so much as they were looking at a client who may be living in his or her home -- an in firm client who then cannot continue to have the same personnel care worker take care of him, but as with many public policy restrictions, the court is very reluctant to take a stand --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Right.

LISA LEVY: And, have it -- have it be a broad-based wall applicable in all situations.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay.

LISA LEVY: So, they did not take a stand in that case, although they mentioned that they thought it was, you know, perhaps --

REP. PORTER (94TH): Problematic.

LISA LEVY: Not a good thing.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Yes.

LISA LEVY: Yeah.

REP. PORTER (94TH): So, you answered my last question on that, and I will open the floor to Representative Hall who has a question for you.

REP. HALL (59TH): Good after -- actually -- yeah. Good afternoon. [Laughing].

LISA LEVY: Good afternoon, Representative.

REP. HALL (59TH): So, just thinking about the -- the reasonable standard that you just spoke of with regard to personal care assistants or home health aides, with regard to a noncompetete; would it be reasonable for an agency that provides these folks to individuals, would it be reasonable to have a noncompetete that they could not work for them privately? For example, I'm placed at a home by an agency, because of my relationship with that family, they decide to then hire me separately from that agency. Would it be reasonable for a noncompetete to be present in that circumstance or because of that -- 'cause the only way I got to that family was through that agency.

LISA LEVY: So, we would take the position that it would not be reasonable --

REP. HALL (59TH): Okay.

LISA LEVY: Because with home healthcare workers, personal care attendants, you're talking about very low-wage earners. As you'll hear from Ms. Wrang in -- in a few moments, she's gonna tell you what she earned hourly, but often they don't earn as much as \$15 dollars an hour. Perhaps, the luckier ones who may be union may earn a little bit more than that, but in many cases, the PCAs, especially those who are not certified CNAs will be earning just slightly above minimum wage, and it's our contention that due

to factors, not only factors involving the huge impediment to impediment to low-wage workers in finding alternative employment if they're subject to a noncompete, but the factors in this economy of stagnation of wages, which is noted in the U.S. Treasury report and in the ETI report. Stagnation of wages and job mobility -- these all point in favor of restricting noncompetes from operating against low-income workers.

REP. HALL (59TH): Yes. I am. [Laughing].

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Representative Rutigliano.

REP. RUTIGLIANO (123RD): Representative Hall eloquently asked basically my questions, so I was considering whether or not I had another one, and I -- to -- I'm in the restaurant business, so I didn't even know we had noncompetes in my industry. I gotta be honest with you. When Sal was talking, I was like really? Really? And -- but the one example he gave probably was probably the only one that we do actually, like if you work for one restaurant that, you know, we own or whatever and you want to go work for another one, the first one has priority over your employment because we can't do one -- we can't hurt the -- the first one that helped the second one, so yeah, maybe we do a little bit of it, but I'm generally supportive of your concept because you know I don't understand the noncompetes, especially for low-wage workers. The one exception in my brain, and I'll work through it, may be the question that he just asked -- Representative Hall just asked because if the agency does go out and get the client, you know, can you work for a month and then -- and then all of a

sudden be privately hired and circumvent the agency? It's just a matter of fairness, but I guess I have more of a comment than a question, but it was a very good question. It made me think, and I appreciate your time. Thank you.

LISA LEVY: Thank you. Thank you very much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): That -- that I think is the question that has come up the most frequently on this issues, and what it did leave me to think about, and I apologize because I was -- I was already starting to stay this to Representative Rutigliano while you were still speaking because it's been in my head, you know, I was recalling that there are temporary agencies that provide workers to an employer who needs some extra help at a particular time, and if that employer decides to hire one of those temporary workers, there's usually as part of the contract between the temp agency and the employer some fee that they have to pay. Maybe they have to buy out the end of the contract or something like that, but the relationship is between the employer and the agency as opposed to the worker and the agency, which I think it might be something to think about here because, you know, if you're contracting services with an agency to get a home -- a home care attendant, then that relationship is between the client and the agency -- the homecare agency, and that's where I think there might be a potential to -- I'm sorry. That's where I think there might be some potential to regulate that relationship, but it seems unfair to me that the low-wage worker is the one that would pay the penalty of not being able to either take employment

with that family or that person or with another family in your proximity.

LISA LEVY: And -- and if I may just say in your scenario where the employer's -- where the owner of the temporary agency is contracting with the person who needs care, for example, in some of those situations the worker is not an employee. The worker may be an independent contractor, which would take it out of the scope of the noncompete bill. In other situations, the worker would be an employee. You know, you would need to look at each situation separately, but I think if -- if the committee is very concerned about that, you know, further discussion could absolutely yield a carveout or appropriate language. I think you'd need to get interested parties together to -- to talk about you know some kind of carveout of this compromised language, but we think -- you know, we stand very strongly on the proposition that low-wage workers should not be subject to noncompete. It simply impedes their job mobility. As you'll hear very soon, it can have, you know, very dire consequences, especially as we know these workers are living paycheck to paycheck.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and I -- and I absolutely agree with that. I mean for me it's even bigger because of the -- the revenue issues that we have in this state and every time I think of things like this, the impediment that I think of is financial, and how we are actually stagnating our own selves and squeezing our purse strings out, know if we're realizing how we're cutting our nose off despite our face, but I do believe that this is an issue that needs to be addressed, and we're gonna do our due diligence and bring in all impacted parties

to the table to see how we can best address it so that it is mutually, you know, agreed to, but on both sides, I think we're gonna be able to do something hopefully if not this year, not year, to - - to get this right and get it corrected. There's no reason why minimum wage workers should be held to a noncompete. That to me makes no sense -- zero, especially stating -- what you stated in your testimony earlier around the original intent of noncompetes.

LISA LEVY: Exactly.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Any further comments or questions? All right. I'm seeing none. Thank you so much for your time and testimony today.

LISA LEVY: Thank you very much, Representative and members of the committee, and Senator Kushner.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. You have a good day.

LISA LEVY: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. Next up, we have Steven, and I'm gonna say Steven G 'cause I'm not gonna butcher that, but I will let you give us the correct pronunciation. From Connecticut Petrol Council testifying on Senate Bill 354, THE GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT.

STEVEN GUYEVAN: Thank you, Chairwoman Porter, Chairwoman Kushner. I'm Steve Guveyan from the Connecticut Petroleum Council. We are a trade association of major oil companies, energy suppliers, pipeline refineries, and we are smack in the middle of decarbonization effort, which is why we're offering comments on Senate Bill 354. We are

not opposed to decarbonization at all. In fact, in many instances, we are on the frontend of that decarbonization effort. This bill we do have some objections to because it goes further than anything that we have really seen anywhere. What it says is in the transportation sector after 2050 we're not going to be able to use carbon-based fuels. So, the question is, you know, what do you do with your car? We're going to be going in the direction of electric cars or hybrids. Probably not everybody gets there, but there are a lot of vehicles that probably are not going to get there by 2050. What do you do with a firetruck? We don't have batteries that you can put into a firetruck, so at least not the kind of batteries that we're gonna need that are powered by electricity. So, how are we gonna keep our snowplows going if we are not using gasoline or diesel fuel? What do you do about the big 18-wheelers running up and down 84 and 91 that go to Superstop and Shop and Home Depot? They don't have the kind of batteries that are going to be available to charge up with electricity, so they're probably going to continue to need diesel fuel.

The point is it takes that whole decarbonization effort to the extreme, and says no carbon. Same thing in the heating sector. I mean if you have no carbon and there's no heating oil and no propane and no natural gas -- I mean what do you do with this building? This is a beautiful building. You have to heat it somehow. So, if you're good with solar panels on the State Capitol and the LOB or wind turbans out front, then the land of steady habits will change accordingly, and we're gonna look a lot different in the future, but if you're not okay with that, then it's probably electricity and as you

heard from an earlier witness, electricity in this state and in the Northeast states, if you're gonna heat with it as opposed to lights, very, very expensive, so the question is low-income, middle-income -- middle-income -- the high-income people can afford it, but you do have to worry about everybody else in there, so our point is in those two sections of this bill on transportation and on heating, this goes very extreme, and it's important that you're aware of that if you want to go like this to move forward. Someone's gonna have to pay for this, and as we go through the bill, there's not too much said about cost because nobody really wants to deal with that in this bill. So, those are our main two objections on it.

I will also say that the legislature here in 2008 passed what we call the granddaddy law [laughing]. It says on carbon emissions you must reduce the emissions across the state by 80 percent by 2050, so that is what everybody in the energy business knows in the Connecticut. That's the law. It's common in New England, so we're in sync with the adjacent states. That's good. What this bill is doing is saying we're gonna move the goalpost on ya. Instead of 80 percent by 2050, it's 100 percent by 2050, and we're gonna put a new rule -- set of new rules in for like 2030 and 35 and 40. So, that is causing hardship for those of us in the energy business. We're asking you please don't change the goalpost in the middle of the game. We've been told 80 percent by 2050. That's what we planned for, and this changes all of that, and we're having a hard time with all of that. So, I'll wrap our -- our comments there and happy to take any questions.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and thank you for those comments. Any comments or questions from the committee? Well, I'm seeing none. I'll just say that I did hear you, everything that you have stated that coincides with earlier testimony is dually noted. Our -- really our focus on this bill has been the Labor component. We do realize that there are components in this bill that are outside of our cognizance such as energy and transportation, and I will leave that to them where they have all of the expertise around that. If it moves forward out of Labor, I am sure that this will have to be heard in those committees as well, so I don't want you to think that the ink is dry on this and that this is the final. That is very unusual in this building, that how we start out with legislation being written as a raised bill, going to a bill that actually gets JFd out of committee usually is very different than what's been proposed, so I say that to put your mind and your heart at ease. This is -- this is just something that we're looking at doing, this is what the conversation is right now. The purpose of this public hearing is to get input from everyone in the public that will be impacted by this such as yourself and your expertise around what we're talking about doing, so thank you for being here today to share -- share your opinion on this with us.

STEVEN GUYEYAN: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. You have a good day.

STEVEN GUYEYAN: You too.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Next up, we have Sally Wrang, union 1199 here to testify on 229, AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' RIGHTS. Welcome.

SALLY BOAL WRANG: Good afternoon, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and members of the Labor Committee. My name is Sally Boal Wrang, and I am currently a personal care attendant in Portland, and a proud 1199 member. I have worked for a private homecare agency in the past that has had me sign a noncompete contract that almost cost me my livelihood. I am here today to ask you to consider regulating contracts like these because they hurt workers like me who are just trying to support our families doing a job we genuinely love.

When I got married and moved to Connecticut, although I advertised myself as a Nanny with my background as a teacher, a woman asked me if I would consider taking care of her father-in-law. We'll call him "Pat". I soon realized I enjoyed taking care of Pat, and I had great ideas to support him. I did more than cooking the usual meals, light cleaning, and keeping him company. I added finding projects to do with him around the yard to keep him feeling that we were accomplishing things, and I made sure he walked every day and exercised. We would joke around, and I learned how to cook homemade Irish food to his liking. His family happily paid me \$20 an hour to take care of him. After a year and a half, my client had dementia to the point where he would not be safe living by himself. I could not stay over to take care of him, so the family had to find care in another way. I tried to find PCA work elsewhere, but it was tough finding another client privately position. I finally applied for a job with Visiting Angels 5

months later, and they insisted that I sign their noncompete contract in order to work there. The contract said that if I left, I couldn't be hired by any client from their company while I had worked there. I would not be able to work for any of their clients until two years after I had left working for Visiting Angels. Furthermore, this contract said it was not a problem to find my own clients at the same time, but I was not to leave any information about me to the Visiting Angels' clients. Keep in mind, these companies usually pay their caregivers \$10 dollars to \$13.50 per hour. I could not earn enough to remain there. Even with my education -- two Masters -- and my year and a half with Pat, still they only offered me only \$11 dollars an hour. After 7 months with the company, I left because they refused to raise my hourly amount beyond \$12 dollars per hour despite the prompt, excellent care that I was delivering, and an additional client who joined Visiting Angels because they noticed my care for their neighbor.

When one client's daughter tried to rehire me about a month after I left, I was told by Visiting Angels that I and my client would be in jeopardy of being fined \$10,000 dollars each if I continued to support this gentleman. This client was so angry about this contract, that he left Visiting Angels altogether. He was a widower who had depression, many medication issues, and I had already driven him to the ER once. He ended up going to the hospital through the Christmas holidays just after I had left. Even in that situation, there was no mercy from Visiting Angels when he no longer wanted their services.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I'm just gonna ask you to wrap up as quick as you can. Okay.

SALLY BOAL WRANG: The company prevented from him from continuing to receive care from someone he knew, that he was comfortable with. Using their contract, they obstructed his continuum of care. Many of these companies hire some very caring people, but these contracts demonstrate greed, not caring about their clients' need, or their caregivers' wages. They ignore the effect on people's lives. If they were worried about their business, they only have to ask caregivers to sign a contract lasting only 6 months after a caregiver leaves. That timeframe would make it clear whether a caregiver was trying to take their business, and it would give the client a chance to hire someone who had left after 6 months.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any comments or questions from the committee? Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): In your comments you -- in your testimony, you talk about the fine of \$10,000 dollars. Was that something that was written into the contract? The noncompete both for the worker and for -- was it also in the arrangement?

SALLY BOAL WRANG: They did not give me the actual contract. When they gave me all the rest of the paperwork, they did not include the contract with it, so when I was called, I didn't have anything to look at. I had to call a lawyer and find out, and he got the -- the document, but I still don't have that.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): So, you signed the document and the employer retained it. You didn't get a copy of it?

SALLY BOAL WRANG: Correct.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Thank you for -  
-

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, you did say that that fine would be applicable \$10,000 dollars toward you and \$10,000 dollars towards -- so that would have been \$20,000 dollars --

SALLY BOAL WRANG: Right.

REP. PORTER (94TH): That they would have collected on this --

SALLY BOAL WRANG: Yeah.

REP. PORTER (94TH): This agreement. This noncompete agreement.

SALLY BOAL WRANG: And, I do not get the hours of a -- of even a full time at any rate, so there's no way I could have paid \$10,000 dollars to anybody. [Laughing].

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, how long was the noncompete for?

SALLY BOAL WRANG: For two years.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Two years. Okay.

SALLY BOAL WRANG: So, that once I left -- and -- and who knows what clients they can say were theirs too.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Right.

SALLY BOAL WRANG: And, there's another problem for me -- which not to take up too much of your time -- which is that whole -- that all of these kinds of agencies saturate the -- you know, when I put out an ad, it's very hard to be seen, so.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. I'm sorry. Senator Kushner has another question for you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Yeah. I just want to make sure I understood your last point. So, essentially, when you were looking for work, are you saying that the agencies typically had already cornered the market in a given geography? Is that what you're trying to say?

SALLY BOAL WRANG: They do everything they can. They have -- where I have put all ads, if they weren't there, they put them in there. They even put them in Craigslist, Indeed, all kinds of places. They don't just put them in newspapers. They're using them everywhere, and if I put an ad in somewhere, they're putting them out, and I'm trying to find small shops, and they don't do that anymore because corporates refuse people. They can't do that, so.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): So, essentially -- and -- and I think you were testifying that you had started out as an independent contractor working on your own --

SALLY BOAL WRANG: But, I was actually putting myself as a nanny, and that's how somebody found me.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): So, once you work for one of these, is this pretty predominant in the industry that not just the employer you're talking about or the agency you're talking about, but most of these agencies have similar noncompetes. Are you aware of that?

SALLY BOAL WRANG: I believe so. That's what I've heard from other people in 1199, coworkers that I've met.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you.

SALLY BOAL WRANG: Mm-hm.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for your testimony today.

SALLY BOAL WRANG: Thank you very much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Next up, we have Nicole Scanclemente, CWEALF, here to testify on House bill 5383, and that would be AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RAGNE FOR A VACANT POSITION.

NICOLE SCANCLEMENTE: Good afternoon, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and members of the Labor Committee. My name's Nicole Scanclemente, and I'm a policy and program associate for the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 5383, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION.

As a recent college graduate from the University of Connecticut, I can attest to how difficult it is to find a job straight out of school, as well as the negotiating skills needed to make sure your work ethic, experience, and skillset is appropriately recognized and compensated in a new position. Unlike myself, women across the United State continue to be affected by the gender wage gap, especially when trying to negotiate potential salaries. In Connecticut, women continue to earn significantly less than their male counterparts, and earn 84 cents to every dollar paid to men. The wage gap is greater for women of color. African American women earn 57 cents, Latinas earn 48 cents, and

Asian women earn 83 cents per every dollar paid to the white non-Hispanic male counterparts.

Studies show that women often ask for less than men when they negotiate even when they are otherwise equally qualified. Research also indicates that women who negotiate their salaries are at a disadvantage due to bias perceptions of them as demanding and less desirable candidates. When women negotiate a salary for a new position and are unaware of what the potential job is worth, these factors can lead to pay disparities. Salary range transparency helps level the playing field for all candidates in the workforce and can make negotiating more equitable and fair. House Bill No. 5383 does not prohibit employers from paying outside the disclosed pay range, and does not remove the ability for the employer to negotiate. Instead, HB 5383 creates a building block for negotiation with the perspective employee, including but not limited to, market value, experience, and benefits.

HB 5383 will give employees a tool to better understand how they're being paid, which can help them see their room for growth in a potential position. CWEALF commends the Connecticut General Assembly for their support and dedication to provide an equitable place for all its residents, and we hope this continues. Supporting this legislation will advance the economic security of women across Connecticut. Thank you so much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any comments or questions from the committee? Yes. Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH): Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for sharing your thoughts today. I like

you think everybody should be paid equally regardless of whether you're a male, female, or whatever. I'm just trying to figure out how this bill actually accomplishes that because you still -- the employer can still provide a range of the salary, so for instance, I know I think the bill tried to narrow the range in some of the language, but if I'm an employer and I'm offered a job at \$45,000 dollars, and I post the range of \$35,000 to \$50,000, and I don't see how -- I mean it's good for someone coming in to know well that's the range, I'm okay with that range, I may want "x" but you would settle for "y", I still think if the employer wants to discriminate. I'm not saying they do, but clearly by your statistics you know males are paid more than females, I still think they can say, you know, the range is \$35,000 dollars to \$50,000 dollars, I'll offer you the job at \$40,000, and you're a female, so I go in for the same job, and they offer me the job for \$45,000 dollars, so we still end up in the same position. I'm a male, I'm getting paid more than you, and we have the same qualifications. I know the goal is to stop that. I'm just not sure if this bill actually does that, so if you -- if you can think of a way to actually accomplish that. You're young, you're just out there in the field, you're interviewing I'm sure or you have interviewed. I have a daughter who's gone from numerous jobs to numerous jobs and interviewed, and I get it, so I'm just looking for a way to actually make it real.

NICOLE SCANCLEMENTE: So, since it's common business practice to ask for a 10-20 percent increase based off like your prior salary, it just -- this -- this bill would allow women to -- for lack of a better

term, it basically makes it easier for women to negotiate, so for lack of a better term, levels the playing field, so if someone were to go to an interview and instead of asking for a 50 percent increase just -- for a woman to ask for a 50 percent increase to be up to par with their male counterparts, now we can -- we can look at a potential salary range, and negotiate amongst that range with the employer based off our skillset, based off our experience, so it just makes it easier for everyone, and it makes it more equitable for everyone, for all candidates to have the same opportunity to negotiate; whereas before, just not providing that salary range would make it harder for women in particular to -- to negotiate and be uncomfortable asking for a 50 percent increase just to be up to par, just to be at the same payrate as their male counterparts. Does that make sense? Does that answer your question a little bit?

REP. SMITH (108TH): It did. I mean, again, I'm -- I hope it works. I think, if I'm not mistaken, I could be. Maybe you know the answer to this. I think there are more female workers now in the workplace than there are males, so with more female workers in the workplace, hopefully this level playing field is something that will happen sooner than later because females now will be in charge and are in charge on many levels in terms of executive positions and ownership of businesses and so forth, so you know, you're getting there, and hopefully, we're there. I mean there should be no discrimination based on sex. I mean if you can do the job, in my mind, you can do the job. I don't care who you are, but obviously, there's people that don't feel that way, and you know, over the years,

you know it's been a long time where males have dominated the workplace, and based on that domination had females had been left behind, but I do think with it being more females in the workplace now than males that this level playing field will curve a little quicker than the normal, so I wish you success. I'm not sure if this bill actually accomplishes what we both want to happen, but perhaps, we can get there by changing the language or -- or just make -- actually, we can probably get there by the fact that there's more females now in leadership positions that will actually now look at a female the same way as a male might look at a female.

NICOLE SCANCLEMENTE: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Yes. You may respond.

NICOLE SCANCLEMENTE: Oh, no. I just wanted to respond to that really quickly. So, there is an experiment where scientists, you know -- I'd have to send over -- look at my resources, and I can get back to you with the specific statistics, but there was one experiment where scientists were presented with identical resumes, one with the name Jane -- I mean Jennifer and the other one with the name John, and it was shown that scientists offered the male applicant for lab manger the salary for that position nearly \$4000 dollars more than to Jennifer, so that's just the wage gap as well. I don't know in regards for the statistics for women in corporate America or in positions of power and executive positions in the workplace, but I could definitely send that information over to you if that's --

REP. SMITH (108TH): Yeah. That'd be great to have, and again, I think -- I mean that's the issue, right, so the male's making \$4000 dollars more than the females based on identical resumes. I'm not sure this bill will eliminate that because you still have a range, so I could still say I'm going to hire John and not Jennifer, and pay -- and pay him \$5000 dollars more because there within the range. Do you see my issue?

NICOLE SCANCLEMENTE: Mm-hm.

REP. SMITH (108TH): So, I get what we're trying to do. I just don't know if this does it, but thank you. I'd love to see the information.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and I mean I will -- because of the point that the good Representative made around the fact that there are actually more women in the workforce today than there are men, and that is continuing to increase. For me, it goes back to revenues, you know, and so this wage gap adds up over time, and I just want to put some of those facts on the record so that we can keep this in perspective. On average, women in Connecticut lose \$529,000 dollars over the course of a 40-year career due to this gender wage gap, and when you talk about white women, it's \$637,000 dollars, black women \$1.2 million, Latinas \$1.4 million, and Asian women \$552,000 dollars, so if you add all of that up and you think about the fact that we're going to have more and more women being heads of households. If we don't level this playing field and bring those revenues to the forefront, the entire state suffers, so this is not just an issue for women, this is an issue for the entire state of Connecticut. This is -- it's bigger than families. It's the community.

It's the state at large, so I thank the good Representative for making that point. Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): When you were testifying, it reminded me of when I first started working I was 24 years old, and I was making very little at my previous job, and I interviewed for a job and had no idea what people were making in that workplace, and I got very lucky because while I was waiting to interview there was a woman who was already working there, and she was making small talk with me, and encouraging me, and then she said, so you know, how much are you going to ask for, and I said, well, I figured I'd tell them what I was making before, and she said, oh, don't tell them that. [Laughing]. When she heard what I was making, it was like half of what everybody else was making, and so she said, you have to ask for \$18,000 dollars an hour, and I was like are you out of your mind. That's like so much money. This was a long time ago, and she said, no you have to ask for it, and in the end, I -- I did take her advice and I asked for the \$18,000 dollars, and I got \$15 instead, which was a big increase for me, but I think it was just lucky for me because I had no idea. I was very anxious to work at that organization. I ended up staying there for a very long time. I loved my work, but I had no idea how far behind I would have been if I had just told them my -- my -- what I was looking for because it would have been much, much lower than that.

I do want to draw attention to -- I think in the bill that we have put forward there is a piece of this that does go to the heart of where employers already employing people in comparable positions. They might be employing them at a higher rate

because of discrimination, which we're all agreed we want to get rid of. There would be a provision here on 5383 where you could be, you know, asked to be paid more because of comparable work that you might be doing, so I thought that was very interesting and then still too that we would get at that component too, which is another way to get around or get rid of gender discrimination or any kind of discrimination because I think your testimony and what Representative Porter added about gender discrimination is actually racial discrimination too. It's not just about gender because we find that women within different ethnic and racial backgrounds are making far less than white women, so I think it really gets at the whole picture.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any further comments or questions? I'm seeing none. We'd like to thank you for your testimony today.

NICOLE SCANCLEMENTE: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): All right. Up next, we have Heather Longo, and I'm not gonna mess that up. Is Heather here? Okay. I don't have to mess it up. Let's see who we have next. Deb McKenna, CELA, testifying on HB 5383, and that is AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION. Welcome.

DEB MCKENNA: Thank you. Good afternoon, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Senator Miner, Representative Polletta. My name is Deborah McKenna. I'm an attorney at Haber, McKenna & Dinsmore. I practice plaintiff's employment law, and I am here on behalf of the Connecticut Employment Lawyer's Association. I'm the secretary of that organization. We're a voluntary group of

lawyers in Connecticut who practice or spend most of -- over 50 percent of our practice representing employees.

I'm here today to talk specifically about HB 5383, although I do want to say we do support the noncompete proposal regarding the minimum wage workers. But, in terms of 5383, I'm not gonna repeat the statistics that have been cited by members of this committee and some of the speakers before me only to point out that you know when you look at some of the facts that are put out there by the National Women's Law Center, there's 97 percent of all occupations have a pay disparity. I think that's a really stark number because that includes professions that are typically thought of as being more female centered as opposed to male centered, right, and so 90 percent -- it doesn't matter, you know, from your entry level factory worker all the way up to high-level CEO -- you know, executives, doctors, lawyers, what not. It is definitely a problem that we need to combat. Here in Connecticut, we have a strong equal pay act, but obviously, it hasn't done enough, right, and we made some changes to it, you know, years ago, and those were great changes that we should not revisit, but there are certainly ways that we can enhance it. what I wanted to focus on, and I did submit written testimony is the issue of the change from equal work to comparable work because I think that that's significant. At least in terms of my practice, I think that would be significant.

With the proposed language, which would require -- which would change equal work to comparable work when viewed as a composite of skill, effort, and responsibility and performed under similar working

conditions. I think that that will be an important step to expand pay equity. Right now, when courts look at these cases, they have interpreted equal work to be substantially equal. Well, what is substantially equal mean? Maybe it doesn't necessarily have to be identical work to your male peer, but there needs to be some sort of common duties and contents, and in our written testimony, I provided some case sites for that. Often, this is how employers descend against these claims, right. They say, well, you weren't doing an equal job, so therefore I can justify paying, you know, this male executive \$50,000 dollars more than you female executive. It's -- it's a frequent defense. In fact, if you look at the defenses filed against the Equal Pay Act Claim for the U.S. Women's Soccer team, one of the arguments that they made was that the men's soccer team does not do equal work compared to the women's soccer team, right, which seems sort of crazy on its face that you would make that argument.

I mean I can wrap up. I will not address the pay -- the second part of the legislation because there's a colleague here who I think is going to focus her testimony on the transparency piece, but I think in general the studies have shown that the more pay transparency there is, the more folks know how to advocate for their rights, and so while the wage range doesn't answer the question, it's one more step in the way to get to pay transparency to allow women to make informed decisions about their pay. I'd be happy to take any questions.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any comments or questions? Nope. Well, I will just say thank you and thank you for making a point about the

difference between equal and comparable and what the arguments have been and how the courts have actually been able to stand on that to unfortunately continue this unfair practice and making -- stating how it has impacted women. The thing that I found interesting was the Supreme Court case from '95 in Massachusetts where the cafeteria workers who had always been female proved that the custodian workers who had always been male, right, were paid twice as much as they were, and in that case, the two jobs are not completely equal but are comparable in skill and responsibility, so in just using that as an example, I mean you think about a cafeteria worker and then you think about a janitor, I think cafeteria workers actually do more work than janitors. Not to take away from what janitors do. So, if we're looking at equal and comparable, it makes a difference, and this is rooted in segregated sex and -- and looking at jobs that are traditionally done by women or men, whichever the case may be, and then to have you make the argument that you just made, I think makes us delve even deeper into looking at it from that perspective that this is really a tremendous issue that we have, and it has to be done -- something has to be done to expand what we've already done around equal pay, and as you've said, we've done some great things around equal pay, but this problem continues to persist, and I think in defining comparable versus equal, it will help us move the ball a little closer to the goalpost, so thank you, and if you want to comment on that, that's fine, but I just wanted to put that out there and just to thank you for bringing up the whole comparable versus equal, and how we can use that to make sure that women are getting a little

closer to where they should be in our efforts to level the playing field.

DEB MCKENNA: Yeah. Thank you. If I -- if I could just give you an example from my own personal practice.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely.

DEB MCKENNA: So, in the -- in the corporate world, right, when you're talking about folks who have reached a certain hire level of position, sometimes there's only one person who holds that position, right, so a director of finance or a director of research or whatever -- director of marketing, right, and in general, to get to that level, you know, from my personal experience, we had -- we had folks -- women who had director roles comparing themselves to men who had director roles reported up to the same person, same general responsibilities, same general duties, same responsibility for supervising other folks. Obviously, they were working in different areas of the corporation, but they still had the same basic skillset that you needed to perform at this high level, but they didn't have common duties, and so they weren't necessarily equal, and you know, it was a -- it was a pretty big challenge to get around where the jobs substantially equal? Because you only had one person performing that job, right, but when our experts looked at it, there was a pretty big pay discrepancy between the men in those roles and the two women who held, you know, same type of role but were paid substantially less money, so I think that the comparable language obviously it gets to the reality of the situation, right, from the cafeteria worker all the way up to the corporate hierarchy.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely, and thank you for giving us that example -- that personal example 'cause we've heard about this not only with attorneys, with doctors. I mean in areas that you wouldn't even assume this is happening because of the level of degrees that's necessary in order to even acquire those positions, so at all levels, this has been an experience that we've heard testimony on. Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Thank you. So, when I was reading through this last night, I also looked at the change between equal and comparable, and thought to my self somebody's trying to create a different scenario should there be a challenge that equal clearly hasn't gotten somebody to where they wanted to go. Am I right?

DEB MCKENNA: Well, I think that the statistics bear out the fact, right, that equal -- the workplace that we're talking about isn't just you take a male employee and a female employee, and you're both creating the same widget, right. I mean the pay disparity that the study show expands across all parts of our economy, and so when you hold to a standard of equal as opposed to requiring, you know, substantially similar skills and responsibility, it does narrow the opportunities to address the underlying pay issues, so again, there are cases that interpret equal -- some in a little bit of a broader sense and some which are pretty -- you know, pretty strict, and no. You didn't have common duties here. You didn't have common -- you know, a common duty or common goal here, so no. It's not equal, and I think it's -- I think it's an acknowledgement of the reality, right. That there are many different work jobs that are performed in

the workplace that require essentially the same level of skill, effort, and responsibility and that are often these pay disparities come up because of perhaps unconscious bias that you know men are just gonna be paid a higher level for that job. So, I don't think it's a way to get around. I think it's a reflection of the reality of the problem, you know.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): I didn't say that it was a way to get around something.

DEB MCKENNA: Okay. Then I apologize.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): My -- my --

DEB MCKENNA: I didn't mean to --

SENATOR MINER (30TH): My experience here is that more often than not we attempt to get to an end result through legislation. That's what it's for. It's to get to an end result, and so in this case, it seems to me that the word comparable will not be litigated. Equal we've litigated. The outcome under that word has been litigated and relitigated, and probably would be relitigated against, and the scenario may change, but if we switch the word from equal to comparable, it's a whole new day, is it not?

DEB MCKENNA: I think that it opens the door -- will it increase litigation? I'm not sure. It opens the door for more folks to be covered under the law. I think you have situations now where you have women who look at the law and say, well, I guess I'm not even covered because you know we're doing 90 percent of the same -- of the same job, but is that really equal? Oh, I might not -- and -- and just perpetuates that pay disparity.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): And, so through you, Madam Chairman, so when you say covered under the law, you think that some members of the public may believe they don't fit in that scenario of equal, yet they might fit in that area of comparable? They might make a determination. So, I go into True Value on Sunday morning and the person behind the counter that collects my money at the front door is not maybe the same person as that collects my money through the parts counter where the chainsaws are, and therefore, she could now argue that those are your -- your -- you're exchanging money for merchandize, I'm dealing with a customer, I'm required to be here, those would be comparable, but maybe not equal, and so I might not have brought a claim to my employer because I didn't feel they were equal or someone told me they weren't equal, but under comparable certainly the appearance might be to more people that they are the same, and therefore, the wage should be the same. Is that the argument?

DEB MCKENNA: I do think that it allows -- that it would raise awareness among folks, right, who may only be looking for the person that they're comparing themselves to who has the exact same job title, right, and so yeah. I think it does get to that. It -- it raises public awareness about that issue. You know, if Connecticut passes this legislation, we will be joining Massachusetts, which has -- which passed similar legislation in 2016, and there are a number of other states -- I believe nine other states have similar language in their Equal Pay Act Laws.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): And, last question, through you Madam Chairman. So, are there statistics about

what the outcomes have been in those other states relative to what the outcomes have been here with the change in word from equal to comparable?

DEB MCKENNA: I have not been able to find any. I'd be happy to look for you, and if I do produce it to the committee -- you know, the Massachusetts laws changed in '16, so there may not be all that much data because cases are still working their way probably through the court, but I'd be happy to -- to take a look at that issue for you.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): So, just a statement. I -- I do hear you, and I -- especially, when you get at the upper end of the -- of the income scale, that there are what I might think are very similar positions, probably are not that similar or not that comparable, and so I understand, I think I understand why the argument, especially at that level might be important to use the word comparable. I'm a little fearful that there's no -- there's no wage threshold, and I'm not saying that there should be one for which these claims could be made, and therefore, if it creates a lot of anxiety in the marketplace for employers, I don't know how that necessarily helps the business community. I can appreciate how it may help someone who is feeling like they've been held down, especially at the lower ranges of pay, so I just -- as I said, when I read the bill last night I -- I noticed the change in the words, and it seemed to me that it's not an insignificant change, so that's kind of my thought on the word comparable -- not insignificant. Thank you.

DEB MCKENNA: Thank you. And, I would just -- with all due respect -- say that it -- you know, the wage

disparity and the effect that it has on the overall economy and particularly on households led by women is not insignificant either, and I think this is a real important step to take towards addressing that.

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, I would have to agree with that statement. Your last statement that you just said because I believe that when you help workers you help businesses, so I think it goes hand-in-hand and is very interchangeable, and as my good colleague said, I agree with him. It is a whole new day. When we started talking about the reason why this was necessary, what we found was the existing equal pay for equal work stand that was drafted to cover women and that were working in manufacturing jobs performing tasks identical to their male counterparts, and this was when they were working on the factory floor, so the stand was effective at eliminating the gender pay scales in that day and time. For the workers that existed, that language that's was written was suffice, but since then, the courts have adapted the comparable work language, the law and for realities for modern workplace, right, because things have changed. It really is a new day. There was a time when you had no women working. I don't remember those days, but there were days when women didn't work. It wasn't acceptable for a woman to have a job outside of her household. Her job was to get married, have children, and take care of the house, right.

DEB MCKENNA: Yep.

REP. PORTER (94TH): For better lack of terms, when I was growing up, what I remember the term being was barefoot and pregnant. That was -- that was how women were seen, but things have changed

drastically. I mean we have an attorney sitting before us. Back in those days, I don't think women could have ever imagined being a lawyer, a nurse, or anything else outside of the home, so that was the reason that the whole comparable work came up, and it was to address inequity in pay that results from a long history of sex-segregated occupations and different pay scales for jobs considered traditionally male versus those considered traditionally female, so that is the whole impetus, and this is why we are doing this -- to support what you have said and what you and others have testified to today, that the world is changing. It is a new day, and because of that, we need to update the laws on the books to reflect what we're trying to do in our goal to level the playing field and bring pay equity to all, and I just want to put that on the record.

DEB MCKENNA: [Laughing]. Thank you. We agree.

REP. PORTER (94TH): All right. Well, thank you for your time and your testimony and your patience today.

DEB MCKENNA: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. You have a good day.

DEB MCKENNA: Thanks. You too.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Up next, we have John Humphries. Is John here?

JOHN HUMPHRIES: Yes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): He is. All right. From Connecticut Roundtable on climate and Jobs, here to

testify on Senate Bill 354, GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT. You have the floor.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: Representative Porter, Senator Kushner, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify on -- in support of SB 354, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT. My name is John Humphries. I'm the Executive Director Lead Organizer for the Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs. I live here in Hartford. This legislation seeks to address the climate crisis and longstanding economic racial inequity by setting Connecticut on a path to 100 percent clean and renewable electricity for transportation and buildings while prioritizing the needs for workers in communities that have suffered the greatest harm from the fossil fuel economy. Connecticut Roundtable and Climate and Jobs builds alliances among diverse constituencies to combat climate change, create jobs, and promote racial, economic, and environmental justice. Precisely what the Green New Deal does. One focus of our work is engaging organized labor in the fight for climate justice. Together we have helped forge a path for climate action that leads to significant local job creation. Last year's historic commitment to 2000 megawatts to offshore wind energy secured near unanimous support in the General Assembly, and has already yielded the state's largest ever procurement of renewable energy. That project will bring hundreds of good union jobs and economic development to Bridgeport, one of the state's forest urban areas. I want to thank you for raising this bill in this committee. This bill belongs in the Labor Committee. The clean energy economy will create tens of thousands of good jobs here in Connecticut

whether it's in renewable energy, clean transportation in terms of creating new transit opportunities, and also in retrofitting buildings to make them more efficient and run on clean energy rather than fossil fuels.

And, then finally, as we look at climate change, we need to recognize that we're gonna have to adapt to the challenges that are coming, and there will be hundreds and thousand of good construction jobs in upgrading our facilities and infrastructure. We need to be intentional about insuring that these are high quality jobs that provide a solid future for workers and their communities. Last year's offshore wind bill required prevailing wage and project labor agreements. This bill does the same. We need to be intentional about ensuring greater investment and opportunities in communities that have suffered the most from polluting industries, and fossil fuel-based transportation. This bill does that, and we need to be intentional about providing a path forward for workers currently in fossil-fuel-dependent industries. Senator Kushner spoke about this this morning in the press conference. The Just Transition Office included in this bill does that, and the language in this bill was modeled after an office in Colorado that I can talk more about if you have questions.

I'll wrap up by saying workers need to lead and shape the transition to a clean energy economy. This bill belongs in Labor Committee, and I urge you to support the bill, and I thank you for raising it.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome, and thank you for being here today, and I thank you for your testimony. Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): So, we know that there has been some pushback on a Green New Deal, and I'm not always sure where it's exactly coming from because I know that sometimes it might be suggested that it's just the title itself that people are reacting to because it's been discussed on a federal level, but I wondered if you could -- if you have any insight into like what are the things that people so object to about a Green New Deal because it does strike me -- as I said this morning -- that we're really talking about planning our economy and for the future, for a time when we won't have the luxury of having some of the industries that we have here today because we know they're polluting and hurting our planet to the degree that we're not gonna have -- these -- these industries are gonna have to go away if we're gonna survive as a planet, and so what I see of this bill is a very intentional -- as you said, a very intentional plan to make sure that in the process of moving toward new industries that we are accounting for the current workforce that are in good paying jobs with good benefits as well as training the workforce of tomorrow, and so I'm -- maybe this is unfair to ask you as you're obviously a proponent of the bill, but I was wondered if you could shed some light on what you think is the negative reaction to this and why it gets such a visceral rection from people?

JOHN HUMPHRIES: I'll try and think of a couple of things. You pointed to one of them. I think that at the national level the Green New Deal became a very polarized issue, and a label, but I think that part of our goal in our experience here in Connecticut is that if we peel away the labels and look at the bill and what the Green New Deal asks

for, it's things that have bipartisan support, that we are for protecting the climate here in Connecticut. Climate action has a long history of bipartisan support. We do have strong support and priority for creating good jobs, and through infrastructure investment, and that's the other thing that the Green New Deal does, and then the third thing is really addressing historical inequities and how do we take this opportunity as we are transitioning to a new economy, to try to correct some of the injustices and inequities of the past. I think the other one -- the other source of some pushback as you've eluded to and as we've heard in testimony today is that it will create some displacement and some changes in the economy, and there will be workers in industries that are affected. As you noted, that as we shift to clean energy economy that will protect the planet, there will be changes in workforce and some industries will have to go away or shift and recreate themselves, and I think that's one of the reasons that being intentional about what that transition looks like and providing resources for workers and communities to help make that transition is so important. The Colorado Just Transition Office that was established last year is focused on coal mining communities, and we're fortunate here in Connecticut that we don't have coal miners, but as we've already heard in testimony today, we do have workers that are dependent on the fossil fuel industry and the fossil fuels in many ways, and so here in Connecticut, we also need to be intentional about what happens with those workers. I look at some of that transition is already happening. If you look at oil -- home heating oil dealers around the state, many of them have already diversified and are

already preparing for the transition that's -- that's coming and already happening so that -- in my house I had two years ago put electric heat pumps in the third floor. I have a three-family house, and the contractor that did that is a heating and plumbing contractor that is also works and delivers oil, but they have diversified their workforce, and they are one of the leading contractors in installing electric heat pumps, and I want to also just touch on that because we heard in testimony earlier today what I think was a fear mongering and misleading figure about how expensive it is to electrify heating in homes, and the reference was to how much it would cost to install electric resistance heating, and electric resistance heating is very expensive. That's absolutely true, and nobody's talking about putting in electric resistance heating. The heating of the future is electric -- mini-split electric heat pumps, which are very efficient. My third-floor unit overall we are saving dollars on heating and -- and cooling.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): That was really helpful 'cause I was wondering about that. I was gonna ask you about it, and you got to it before I checked in with you on that as well because I thought there was probably another piece to this, but thank you. That was extremely helpful.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Yes. I will say it was extremely helpful as well. Quite comprehensive in what you've testified to today, and I just want to drive you your mention of the Just Transition Office that was mentioned earlier at the press conference because when I referred to it, it really is about assisting the workers and employers, right, because we often hear that you know how is this going to

impact business? Are we being business friendly? And, I will just say it again and again, whenever we're being worker friendly, we're being business friendly and vice versa.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: Absolutely.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I think that it's a tandem that should go hand in hand, and the fact that the office will conduct a study, you know, I think is really important on the growth areas and these sector-specific, and what it is they're reporting and what those impacts are, right, so all of this goes into play, and I think the other thing that's really important when we talk about the apprenticeship programs and like the workforce development to make sure not only are we building a bench, but we're actually supplying a transitional pathway for these fossil fuel employees to be a part of an industry that is not only growing, but pays a really great salary, and to take into account the many young people that are coming out of school today that can't afford to go to college. These are jobs that do not require a degree -- many of them.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: That's correct.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I would say the majority of them, if not all of them, so I want people to be mindful of that and to keep these things close to heart as we move forward with this proposal because it's a win/win for everyone, and I know that change is painful [laughing], but I -- I do appreciate you know everything that you -- you've spoken to today, but for me, it always comes back to -- because I do sit on Appropriations, I see a lot of this translation for me it translates into funding.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: Mm-hm.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You know, where's the revenue that this state needs? How is this going to help bring that revenue to the state? And, there's no mistaking, I would much rather see us repairing a bench, not only from high school, but a transition for the current workers to go into these high-paying jobs with great benefits because it's gonna benefit all of us. When you lift from the bottom, everyone is elevated, and that's how I see this in the big scheme of things.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: Excellent.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you so much.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: If I could just point out that the Just Transition Office in Colorado is staffed and funded, and one of the things that they have in addition to providing workforce training and retraining is that they also are funded for wage differential benefits, so that workers who are shifting and in this case in Colorado it's coal miners many of whom as they shift out of union mining are not yet finding work with the same pay scale. This provides supplemental income to cover some or all of that difference.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Wow. Thank you for bringing that to our attention.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: Yes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): All right. You have a great day.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): I'm sorry. Senator Kushner for the second time.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I was just gonna apologize because we ended up debating a little bit up here. Some of the things you were talking about I think generate some really good discussion 'cause obviously when we get into our committee meetings, we tend to have a lot to say to each other about the bills that we're looking at, but you know, I think getting to the core of what bothers people about this bill, and that's why I asked you that question. You know, it does cause us to -- it engenders a lot of conversations, so I apologize for doing that while you were sitting there, and Representative Porter was asking you questions 'cause I know those questions are important as well. Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Senator.

JOHN HUMPHRIES: I'm always pleased to provoke good conversation.

REP. PORTER (94TH): It's a good thing in this building. Trust me. So, next up, we have Samantha Dynowski with the Sierra Club testifying on Senate Bill 354, A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT. You have the floor, Madam.

SAMANTHA DYNOWSKI: Thank you, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Representative Polletta. My name is Sam Dynowski. I'm the State Director of Sierra Club Connecticut. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of Senate Bill 354, AN ACT CONCERNING A GREEN NEW DEAL. The climate crisis I would argue is the biggest threat ever to human existence. You won't be surprised to hear that I'm pretty concerned about

it, but recent events have shaken me to be even more concerned. Last December as wildfires raged in Australia, it was reported in the news that over 1000 people in one community escaped those fires by standing in the ocean and had to be rescued by the Australian Navy. It's terrifying. In January, the Antarctic peninsula hit 65 degrees, the highest every reported there. That's why I commend the committee for raising Senate Bill 354 and connecting the dots between climate, jobs, and equity. On climate, the bill aims to meet our mandated greenhouse gas reduction goals that are already on the books through the Global Solution Warming Act, and put us on a pathway to a clean energy future. The bill recognizes the critical link between jobs and climate action. We expect there to be job growth as we transition to a clean energy economy.

In California last year, they did a study of just a part of the economy that would be effected as they moved to building electrification. That was a really comprehensive study, and you know California is a different place so we can't compare. We kind of need to do our own, but they found that they would have a net gain of 100,000 jobs just in moving from fossil-fuel-based buildings to electrified buildings for heating and cooling and cooking purposes.

In Connecticut in 2017, a report that DEEP and CDIA did on our clean energy workforce showed that we had real shortages then. As we move to meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets, we are going to need much more. We expect to see growth in energy efficiency jobs and solar jobs and wind and storage, and so knowing that right now -- or in 2017 -- I'm not sure because it hasn't been updated where

exactly where we are exactly today, but that we were experiencing shortages and that employers were having a hard time finding these employees, that the steps taken in this bill will help us to -- and I'll wrap up quickly -- to study where we need to be and how we're gonna get there with jobs.

And, the last thing I want to mention is as the way this bill recognizes the barriers to clean energy and clean energy jobs in our most vulnerable communities, and helps lift up those communities in accessing both energy efficiency, clean energy, and workforce development to move into the jobs that are going to be created, so thank you very much for the opportunity and for your consideration of our testimony.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): So, I'm glad you reported on the California study about the 100,000 additional jobs that would be available in moving to electric in buildings, but I wondered the issue that was raised in earlier testimony today was the cost of the ratepayers for going electric, and can you address that at all?

SAMANTHA DYNOWSKI: So, were talking about moving to zero emission over time, so typically, we're talking about replacing over 30 years of moving to electrification, so you know beginning right now and on the books in Connecticut, we subsidize fossil fuel appliances and equipment. For us to stop doing that and move to electric sources for those would be really important, and we do know that moving -- studies have shown that both transportation and building electrifications will actually drive down the rates of electricity, and as John said, air

source and ground source heat pumps are much more efficient. We're not talking about baseboard electricity, which is very inefficient. They're far more efficient than other types of fueling of heating and then when combined with the fact that lots of people are putting in air conditioning because we're having warmer summer trends that overall we expect folks to save money as they move in that direction, but zero over time is how we look at it because we're not talking about transforming everything today. It's replacing as equipment fails and needs to be replaced.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, Senator, and thank you for your testimony today.

SAMANTHA DYNOWSKI: Thank you very much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. You have a good day. Next up, we have Chris Kuhn, and Chris will be testifying on Senate Bill 354, AN ACT CONCERNING THE GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT. Welcome.

CHRIS KUHN: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome.

CHRIS KUHN: Co-chairs Kushner and Porter, and Representative Polletta, my name is Chris Kuhn. I'm a longtime Connecticut resident, and I'm here as an individual member of the public concerned about climate. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you in support of this bill. In September 2019, Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont issued executive order No. 3 and set forth a goal of 100 percent clean energy grid by 2040. For a growing community of people alarmed by our accelerating climate crisis, this executive order along with the

governor's work with this legislature to enable a development of wind energy was a tremendously welcomed shift away from the policies of the governor's predecessor who played a pivotal role in the expansion of natural gas infrastructure throughout the state.

The governor's focus on climate concerns has been reflected in the direction taken by his commissioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Katie Dykes. In an extensive interview on energy and climate in February -- that was February 11, the full story on NPR with Ron Ropiak -- the commissioner stated that we "need a more aggressive approach. Science is telling us we have less time than we previously thought to make significant reductions in carbon emissions, and we owe it to our kids and grand-kids." Commissioner Dykes stated also "financial markets are taking climate into account" and "technologies are becoming more prevalent and affordable. The cost of battery storage have come down precipitously. Further", she said, "all of the commitments that we are scaling up under the Lamont administration -- investment in renewable resources and energy efficiency will drive clean energy employment, clean energy jobs right here in our state. Our commissioner said that's what's behind a Green New Deal - a green economy." In this interview, citing Bridgeport as a "perfect example" Commissioner Dykes said, "We are pleased to be using our energy dollars here in our state to create new opportunities and put people to work."

In these times, taking effective action on our climate crisis must occur on regional, state, and local levels. Here in Connecticut, effective response to our climate crisis will require a

broadly encompassing agenda and close collaboration between Governor Lamont and this legislature. That collaboration was demonstrated in the last session by the provision for the creation of 800 megawatts - - or 2000 megawatts of wind energy. The essential role of our workforce is what brings us here today.

If I could just close?

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you.

CHRIS KUHN: Senate Bill 354 deserves your support on three major fronts. The bill identifies specific and time-dependent carbon emission targets across multiple sectors as described. The bill provides a means to prepare workers and create good jobs in the transition to clean energy, and third, the bill reinforces the critical role of DEEP in accomplishing these goals. For these reasons, I urge your support and I thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Any comments or questions?

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you for coming here, and I do appreciate the emphasis that you put on DEEP because I do think we have to acknowledge what's been done already and moving us in the right direction, so I appreciate you including that in your testimony.

CHRIS KUHN: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): All right. UP next, we have Kristina Carvalho. I hope I didn't butcher that, and she is here to testify on HB 5383, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION. You have the floor, Madam.

KRISTINA CARVALHO: Thank you. Good afternoon, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and Representative Polletta. My name is Kristina Carvalho, and I'm a Master Social Work Student concentrating in policy practice at the University of Connecticut. I stand in support of HB 5383, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION. As we've heard from prior speakers, women in Connecticut make significantly less than their male colleagues earning an average 84 cents to every dollar paid to men. This gap is even more severe for women of color, dropping as low as 48 cents for Latina women. This legislation will help narrow these gender and racial wage gaps by strengthening existing law to further improve pay transparency.

Currently, public act 15-196 and public act 18-8 prohibit pay secrecy in the workplace and the use of salary history during the application process. Requiring employers to include salary ranges in their job postings will provide women a fair chance to negotiate under the same salary parameters as male applicants. Research shows that when applicants are clearly informed about the range and types of benefits available, women are more willing to negotiate and are more successful in doing so.

HB 5383 not only benefits applicants, but serves as a useful tool for employers. Providing this information is critical and gaining trust from perspective employees. Additionally, it saves resources by condensing the hiring process to those who are serious about obtaining the position. This bill mirrors legislation already passed in Colorado, Washington, and California, and is a necessary step forward to ensure Connecticut continues as a leader

in gender equity and pay transparency. I hope the committee will vote favorably to ensure that women in Connecticut like myself are paid what they deserve. Thank you for your time and consideration.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for a great testimony, and congratulations on being in graduate school for MSW. We need more social workers, more social workers, more social workers.

KRISTINA CARVALHO: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Anyway. Thank you for making mention about more -- more willing and successful at asking for what I think is a fair wage for women because women just have not been good negotiators and for a very good reason. And, because we start out behind the eight ball, no matter how good we get at it, I don't think on our own we'll ever achieve the goal of pay equity, so that's why this legislation is so important, and I just want to say what a great job you did. I mean your mom and dad should be very proud to have you sitting here before us today. That was tremendous, and I'm glad to see that you are physically engaged in the things that are going to really dictate your future and your peers future going forward, and I'm hoping that this gets done so that we can bridge that wage gap and bring the revenues to the state that we so rightfully deserve, and the wages that you all and myself and women like us so rightfully deserve. It's time to level the playing field, so thank you for being here today.

KRISTINA CARVALHO: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Senator Kushner.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I spoke earlier about my experience when I was looking for my first day job, and my first big break, and that I could have made a big mistake if I hadn't had someone coaching me and someone I didn't even know, but I -- I do want to say we have come a good distance. When I was taking that job, women earned 59 cents on the dollar compared to men, so we have come a distance, but what I appreciate about this -- your testimony and this bill is that we really -- I don't think any of us would expect anything less than perfect on this issue of gender equality and fair pay, and so I know that the creativity that went into thinking about how do we tackle this problem from different angles is part of what we see in the bill that you just testified about, so both the transparency issue, but also looking at how do we compare jobs and -- and make sure that we are doing that in a fair way, so I want to thank you for being here. I encourage you to keep up this kind of important work because we still have a long way to go. Thank you.

KRISTINA CARVALHO: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. All right. Next up, we have David Gable, Hocon Gas, testifying on Senate Bill 354. [Background conversing]. And, who is he to you? [Background conversing]. So, you all work together?

MICHAEL MORISSEY: Yes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): And, that would be okay with him?

MICHAEL MORISSEY: Yes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Well, that's okay with me. Just checking. [Laughing]. I don't want to get

beat up when he get here. And, please state for your name -- your name -- for the record, your name and if you know what number you are on the list, so that we can go ahead and check you off.

MICHAEL MORISSEY: Yes. I'm speaker 21. My name is Michael Morissey, and I reside in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. You may proceed.

MICHAEL MORISSEY: Thank you, Co-Chair Porter and members of your committee. We're here today to speak in opposition to Senate Bill 354, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT. We oppose this bill due to its energy scope, which is limited to electric only. One of anything is never a good idea. For example, there is a good reason why commercial airlines have at least two engines. Our coalition is a stakeholder in our state's three Clean Cities Programs. Our collective mission is to promote the use and adoption of the six federally recognized clean alternatives fuels -- ethanol, hydrogen, biodiesel, natural gas, propane, and electricity in the transportation sector where 41 percent of all of our air pollution is occurring today. Propane, for example, is the third leading transportation fuel in the world powering over 27 vehicles globally. In the United States alone, we now have close to 20,000 school buses powered by clean burning propane transporting over one million kids a day. Bluebird Bus, the nations leading bus manufacturer is now producing more propane-powered buses than diesel ones for the first time in their history. In Connecticut alone, there were close to 600 propane-powered vehicles in -- propane-power school buses in operation today. This number will

grow by an additional 72 once an unnamed city announces this month their planned budgeted plan to replace all their diesel vehicles with propane ones.

Representative Porter, Senator Kushner is not here and Senator Miner, collectively in your districts there are over 200 propane buses in operation. These buses are eligible for the 37 cent per gallon all fuels credit, which was again restored this past December. Propane buses operate at half the cost of diesel ones, and Senate Bill No. 354 would eliminate these savings in districts you serve and jeopardize the cost and environment savings in other districts, which have opted to operate on school buses with propane. Transportation and its related emissions are detrimental to our society. We need to keep all six federally endorsed clean alternative fuels in the mix to combat pollution today and in our future. One of anything is never a good thing, and we urge your committee not to advance this electric only legislation. That completes my testimony. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for your testimony, and thank you for reiterating and augmenting what has been said earlier by folks that are in agreement with you. Like I've stated before, I'm learning a lot here today around this particular issue in that wheelhouse. For me, the concentration is the labor fees, and it will lead this committee hopefully, going to other committees to have cognizance over what concerns you, and I'm sure with their expertise they will be able to better address that than I can, but I just want to say thank you for being here today and enlighten me on the things that I don't have a full scope of understanding around.

MICHAEL MORISSEY: Well, you're most welcome. Thank you for your kind words, and thank you for your open-mindedness.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely.

MICHAEL MORISSEY: And, the open-mindedness of your committee.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Yes. It's a learning process, and I am open to listening and learning, and that's why I am very grateful that you and the gentleman in the back -- I can't remember his name, but he testified earlier. I do appreciate, you know, the comments and the testimony, and -- and the fact, you know, that you're bringing from your expertise and wisdom around this issue, so thank you.

MICHAEL MORISSEY: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Any comments or questions? Representative Vargas? All right. Senator Miner? Okay. Well, you are free to go, and thank you again for your testimony and your time.

MICHAEL MORISSEY: Thank you very much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're very welcome. Next up, we have Irene Bassock, and that will be a testimony on HB 5383, which is AN ACT CONCERNING DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION. You have the floor, madam.

IRENE BASSOCK: Dear members of the Labor and Public Employees' Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly. My name is Irene Bassock. I am a 20-year resident of West Hartford and an employment attorney with an office located in that town. I have been practicing employment law for 24 years. Up until this past summer, I descended companies against

employee-related claims brought by their employees. In August, I left my in-house position in the law department of my most recent employer, one of the largest companies in the State of Connecticut, and opened my own law practice. I switched sides and now represent individuals who have disputes with their employers. I'm uniquely situated to provide testimony because I have had a close inside view of how employers make compensation related decisions and how protective they are with that information, and I also understand how difficult it is for women to enforce their rights to equal pay when they have no access to that closely guarded information. The hard reality is that working women know that they are being underpaid when compared to their male colleagues. I'm not here today to educate this committee on that truth and leave it to the others to share that data with you. Instead, I'm here to testify about women not having access to crucial information about pay scales that would enable them to enforce their rights against discriminatory pay practices. Women simply do not know what their male peers are actually earning unless that information is discovered by chance and may be inadvertently left exposed on a photocopy machine or attached to an email, or a colleague may share the information in a conversation. Sometimes, the employer produces the information when compelled to do so in a related litigation. Yet, all too often women suspect pay disparities but cannot prove it. They come to my office with these suspicions, but without the proof and we have no way of helping them. Suspicion alone cannot support a claim of discrimination under federal or state laws such as Title 7 or the Equal Pay Act. Employers do not have the incentive to disclose this confidential information because it

could expose them to pay discrimination litigation. They have no safe harbor to release this information. Instead, they hold it tightly to the best to reduce the risk of lawyers, like me, bringing claim on behalf of female employees and applicants who are paid less than their male coworkers. While some employers say they are taking steps to close the gender pay gap, efforts to close it are quite costly. These so-called efforts will not voluntarily occur on a timetable that will make any meaningful change to individual women who are experiencing the real tangible effects of ongoing and perpetuated pay disparity. So, while laws have existed for years requiring employers to pay women the same as their male coworkers, most of employers see this as low risk. They have no incentive to change the discriminatory pay practices because they know that female employees and applicants do not possess the information necessary to prove it. It's hidden, and it's a risk that barely hits their radar. By removing the protection afforded by this veil of secrecy, employers will finally have an incentive to invest in closing the gender gap -- pay gap. I urge this committee to pass House Bill 5383, so that pay scale information is disclosed to women applying for jobs, both on an internal and external basis. Armed with this information, women will have the information necessary to make informed decisions and if necessary, the evidence to enforce their rights under state and federal laws. Thank you for your consideration and your time.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any comments or questions from the committee? The only thing I will say in listening to your testimony it just drives home the fact that I've actually been in the

workforce for 40 years, and to think that I have lost over \$1 million dollars of a working career makes my belly ache, and I do want to see us put an end to that disparity, not just for women of color, but for all women. Dollars matter, and it matters not just to the women who are at work every day, but to the families that they support in the communities that they live in, so thank you so much for your time, your testimony, and most of all for your patience today. I appreciate you waiting.  
[Chuckling].

IRENE BASSOCK: If I may, there was one question that the committee did pose to an earlier attendee -  
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REP. PORTER (94TH): Absolutely.

IRENE BASSOCK: And, the question was will this bill stop discrimination in the hiring process? And, the answer is absolutely not. Rather this bill is just another tool to get us to that place. The range that we're talking about in the bill exposes the contours of the playing field, and so it's just one step in the right direction.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you so much for that. I appreciate you putting that on the record, especially with you being an attorney with experiences on both sides of the point. I think that is invaluable, and I look forward to speaking to you in the near future.

IRENE BASSOCK: Thank you very much.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're very welcome. You have a great day.

IRENE BASSOCK: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Next up, we have Mr. David Sutherland, and he will be testifying on Senate Bill 534. Is that right?

DAVID SUTHERLAND: 354.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Okay. Typo on my end. I was looking for it. AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN NEW AND HELPS THE ECONOMY FOR CONNECTICUT. You have the floor, sir.

DAVID SUTHERLAND: Thank you very much. My name's David Sutherland. I'm here today on behalf of the Nature Conservancy, which is a global conservation organization, to thank this committee for raising this bill, and to express our support for the types of measures included in this bill, and I also want to thank the partners here who have put so much work into this, and to thank our partners here and literally around the world who have helped my organization become much more aware of the labor and the environmental justice components of environmental and climate policy. I -- I dare say my organization is the largest conservation organization in the world. We have learned a lot from other cultures, other partner organizations around some of these issues, and so really thank you for really raising a bill that -- that combines them. I know this is outside of your purview, but because it was raised earlier, I want to address a point that was raised by an earlier speaker. Raising concerns about the -- some of the labor and environmental abuse that goes into the manufacturer of batteries that are used in electric vehicles. I don't agree with singling out the battery industry because I think a lot of industries have a lot of problems with both labor conditions and

environmental impacts, but I -- I do think it is a critical issue that we really need to pay attention to, so I thank that person for bringing it up.

I do want to point out there have been -- there's been some real progress started in the battery industry. Some of the major auto -- Volvo, VW, Ford, Fiat have joined with Glenco, which is the world's largest cobalt miner to create something called the responsible resourcing block chain network, and they're -- what they're trying to do with this is to trace cradle the grave the production and mining of some of these what are called conflict minerals in some countries to try and improve the working conditions and the environmental impacts of the mining and production of these materials. Microsoft is a member of another organization called Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance, which is trying to do the same thing. The term is block chain, which is used in the bitcoin industry, but they're also using it in the mining industry to sort of look at cradle to grave -- how are these things being produced, and Canada and Europe are also trying to set up their own battery manufacturing initiatives that will get away from the coal-based Chinese battery manufacturing focus, so I think we've got some important progress being made in that -- in that field.

So, I just lastly want to say that many of the concerns and problems that we're facing in society right now whether it's new diseases, new pathogens, wild fires, refugee migration, so many other issues are going to be exacerbated -- they're being exacerbated by climate change, so it is a critical,

critical issue that we have got to address in some very bold and dramatic ways. Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Any comments or questions? I'm seeing none. I'd like to thank you again for your testimony and your time today.

DAVID SUTHERLAND: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Next up, we have Terry Fitzgerald, YWCA, here to testify on 5383, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION. You have the floor, Madam.

TERRY FITZGERALD: Thank you, Representative Porter and members of the committee. My name is Terry Fitzgerald. I am YWCA Hartford regions advocacy and community outreach coordinator, and I'm a resident of Enfield. I stand in support today of House bill 5383, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION. YWCA is in support of this. My testimony today is based on a personal experience. Pay equity is important to me. As I feel the lack of equity has impacted my career earnings, statistics have shown, which was brought up earlier, that in Connecticut women can lose up to \$500,000 dollars over the course of a 40-year career due to the gender gap.

Early in my career, I worked as a manager and was promoted to supervising manager. It was an increase in salary. A new male employee was brought on to manage as a manager under my supervision and given the same salary I was making as supervising manager. This gentleman was younger and had less work experience and managerial experience that I

possessed. When I approached my superiors, I was told the reason this employee was given the same salary even though he had less experience was that some day he as a man would have a family to support, and I as a woman would be taken care of. This type of thinking and process is unfair to women and our careers. Studies show that more than 170,000 family households in Connecticut are headed by women. Compensation should be based on qualifications and equal work, and not perceptions of male versus female roles in society. Receiving these lower wages follows you throughout your career, and puts you at a disadvantage when negotiating salaries and future positions.

And, it has been discussed earlier that when negotiating salaries women do tend to ask less, but when you're starting off at that lower wage, it further impacts that. I believe having transparency and requiring fair and equal pay for equal work in regard to women's earnings is critical to economic growth and would allow the United States economy to produce additional income in the billions of dollars. I strongly support House Bill 83 -- 5383, and I hope that committee and Connecticut lawmakers will vote favorable to ensure that women in Connecticut are paid what they deserve. Thank you for your time.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for your testimony. I'm not surprised but a little taken back [clearing throat] -- excuse me -- by your personal story. Really insulting for me as a woman as I'm sure it was for you.

TERRY FITZGERALD: Yeah.

REP. PORTER (94TH): For the assumption to be made that you would "be taken care of" when the fact of the matter is that we are currently in a position in this country, not just Connecticut alone, where there is actually women heading households, so.

TERRY FITZGERALD: Yes.

REP. PORTER (94TH): A slap in the face to the person that said that to you figuratively.

TERRY FITZGERALD: [Laughing].

REP. PORTER (94TH): Not -- not promoting violence -

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TERRY FITZGERALD: No.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Yeah. How dare you? But, thank you for sharing that story 'cause it really does lend credence to the importance of this bill and how critical it is that we get it done, and we get it done sooner than later. This has been an effort that was made prior to this year and hopefully, this will be the year that we can move this forward with bipartisan support, you know, because I don't think that gender pay and the disparities that we're discussing here today can be defined by these -- our independence or unaffiliate. I think it impacts all communities, all districts, the entire state of Connecticut. Any comments or questions from the committee? I'm seeing none. I thank you so much for being here today.

TERRY FITZGERALD: Thank you for your time.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. Next up, we have Steve Sack with Sack Energy who will be testifying on Senate Bill 354, GREEN NEW

DEAL/ECONONMY. However, you want to put it. You have the floor, sir.

STEVEN SACK: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Steven Sack. I'm the owner of a family-run energy business here in Hartford, Connecticut. We've been here for over 100 years. I'm here asking why. Why are we trying to force a change over to a power source that is primarily run by fossil fuels, which is with an unstable grid? Why are we forcing a switch to a power source that the EPA lists as a cause of 28 percent of our emissions? Why are we forcing a change to electricity that doesn't have a grid with the capacity to sustain the load that will be placed on it under total electrification? There are other options, not just one source. Our industry has a renewable fuel called biodiesel that can help meet our greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and it doesn't require hundreds of millions of dollars or even billions of dollars to implement, and will give greenhouse gas emissions reductions today, not in 20+ years from today. Other states across the country recognize the need for fuel diversity and include them in a portfolio as they understand it protects their states and residents. Like them, we need solutions that work today and a variety of solutions to meet our needs. Without fuel diversity, we are at the mercy of electrical grid system.

During an MIT symposium, it revealed that wind and solar power has two to three times lower output in the winter, which is exactly when our electricity needs for heating will peak, and if we are forced to switch to electric heating under total electrification, Connecticut will need major changes to make this happen. First, the whole grid system

will need to be replaced with a new modern system to handle the increased load, and 75 percent of our production today, will need to be converted to zero emissions, and then we need to double that. Electric rate payers will have to pay for the massive increase in electricity prices, and with this, there is potential for blackouts, brownouts that will arise from the heavy loads that the grid system will have to manage. When our energy needs exceed normal production of the power providers, we'll be forced to go with standby peak generation that will drive up the emissions and not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There is no state plan today to modernize the electrical grid, create zero emissions electricity, so why would the state agree to let anyone file suit against the state if we can't meet our goals. This could bankrupt our state. This is an example of don't put all your eggs in one basket, and this is one that legislature should consider when making the decision on this bill.

We're here with this committee I would say mostly talking about job creation. With the conversion to electric heat onset that you're putting forward in this bill, is actually going to reduce the jobs here in Connecticut. Once the heat pumps are installed, there -- there's almost no workforce for that to go forward. The cost to the consumers to change to electric heat pump in a survey done in Massachusetts, an average 1500 square foot house cost over \$20,000 dollars. The cost to run the electric heat pumps are more than double of what bioheat or heating oil would cost. Our residents can't afford these costs. This bill is not gonna create any jobs that -- that we can see here, and it's just gonna kill jobs. We have biodiesel here

that's made in Connecticut that's creating thousands of jobs, and -- and people delivering it that create 10s and 20s and 30,000 jobs here in Connecticut. This would all disappear with electrification. Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you for your testimony. Do committee members have questions? Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): I just wanted to thank you and the others who have come here to testify today on behalf of the energy industry. I think that is certainly part of this conversation that so far may not be fully understood. How many people work for you currently?

STEVEN SACK: My operation we have about eight employees in -- in our -- the oil business and biodiesel business here in Connecticut delivering fuel, probably over 20,000 people.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): So, through you Madam Chairman, 20,000 employees in the state of Connecticut and you know I -- I know that there are some people that have an interest in trying further -- trying to further solar energy and wind energy. Do you have any sense as to how many of those jobs might be available in Connecticut? I'm aware of at least two wind turbans in Connecticut. I'm not aware of anymore.

STEVEN SACK: I do not know. Once they're built, my guess is you have very minimal employees running those things. That's it. We don't even know when there's gonna be enough -- the windmill in New London right now is gonna provide three percent of our entire power needs today. It's a drop in the

bucket. There -- there's no plans to actually get green energy when we're here for -- to try and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. We have a product made here in Connecticut putting people to work here in Connecticut that can have immediate greenhouse gas emissions reductions, but we seem to want to go a different route where there's no plan to actually do that, and -- and a cost to the taxpayers that's gonna be unbelievable.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Other questions from committee members? Okay. Thank you very much for being here --

STEVEN SACK: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): And, for testifying today. Next up, we have -- is David Gable here now? [Background conversing]. Okay. [Background conversing]. Okay. We'll move to Chris Phelps.

CHRIS PHELPS: Hi. Thank you, Senator and members of the committee. I'm Chris Phelps, the Safety Director of Environment of Connecticut, and we submitted written testimony on the bill before you. I'm not actually gonna read that testimony. You have it available to refer to. I'd actually like to speak to -- it's a little bit of topic of the conversation that was just happening with the previous person speaking, as well as a question, Senator Kushner, that you asked earlier of my friend John Humphries. Really speaking to this you've heard a lot of advocates for this bill today. We've also heard a lot of folks speaking in opposition to this bill, and I'm speaking on Senate Bill 354, by the way. You know, my answer to the question that

you asked earlier, Senator Kushner, is that -- you know about the ferociousness [sic] of the -- of the opposition is listen to the voices who are opposing this bill, who they are and who they represent. It's largely the fossil fuel industry and related businesses because stopping climate change does require us to stop burning oil, gas, and coal, not burn just a little bit less, but actually stop burning it altogether. That's the answer to the question how can we stop climate change. Hard stop. That's the answer to that question. And, this bill does speak to that by establishing a requirement that Connecticut switch to 100 percent renewable and zero carbon energy starting with electricity in states like California and New York have already done, and in short order after that, switching to 100 percent clean energy for transportation fuels and heat and run our buildings, so it's no surprise that those who today are in the business of extracting and processing, distributing, burning fossil fuels are alarmed by this bill because it's a wakeup call for them as much for anyone that their businesses are faced with huge change and huge disruption, not just in some distant hypothetical future, but over the course of the next 10, 20, 30 years as our economy necessarily transitions to 100 percent clean and renewable energies.

So, therefore, I would also speak to not just that section -- those sections of this bill, but to this committee's credit the bill addresses far more than just that transition of energy sources. It speaks to the economic, the employment, job training, and equity needs that our state will face, that businesses will face, that employees of those

businesses will face over the next two to three decades as the transition of clean energy economy occurs. Because -- and please make no mistake about this -- we must as a state and as a nation transition to 100 percent renewable and zero carbon energy sources. The failure to do so will result in catastrophic economic, public health, and security consequences from climate change, and that fundamentally is why we need legislation like this starting with the transition to 100 percent clean electricity and more. I'll stop there. I'm shocked I don't think I've heard -- [alarm] -- there it goes. Okay. [Laughter].

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Questions from anyone?

CHRIS PHELPS: If you have any questions, I'll be happy to answer them.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Senator Miner.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): Thank you. Thank you also for being here. You know, I hear from constituents on both sides of many of these issues, but I got to tell you this year I probably had the largest number of complaints from constituents about trying as hard as they might to convert to these green applications. So, I'll tell ya in -- in two cases in one community people went through the exercise of having solar panels put on their roof only to end up with a leaky roof. I've been working with folks in that program. They've now told my constituent to go see the Department of Consumer Protection. I said have you stopped the installer from at least doing the work temporarily to find out whether or not they're properly credentialed? No.

CHRIS PHELPS: Hm.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): I was on the phone maybe two months ago with a constituent who spent \$8000 dollars to do the right thing, to try and get us to where it is you'd like us to go, Chris, and the net effect of that expenditure was her electric bill went up. It went up because she heats with a heat pump, and so her energy cost went through the roof by converting from petroleum-based to electric-based, so some of what we're talking about here, to be quite honest with you, doesn't even belong here. We're not even qualified to hear a lot of what we're hearing today because we're not the Energy and Technology Committee. Despite what you want to have happen, it's the wrong venue, and I got constituents that are mad that their electric bill keeps going up and up and up because we keep layering on expenses to pay for some new deal, and they've had it. So, I'm happy to listen to you. I wish it was the right venue. I'm saying it's not. I don't think we're ever gonna have the kind of network of windmills here in Connecticut 'cause equally I hear from my constituents they don't want them in their yard. Some of them don't mind them in your yard, but they don't want them if they can see them from their yard, and they don't even want solar panels. So, I don't know where we're going here. We're certainly gonna hear even more testimony today on a bill, but the labor aspect of this I think is -- is probably the only piece that should be here, and I don't see -- I don't see how we get there with what this bill does. But, again, you know, I thank you for being here and I just wanted to share with you as an advocate for zero emissions I guess --

CHRIS PHELPS: Yeah.

SENATOR MINER (30TH): That my constituents have heard you and others and are trying to do the right thing, and many of them, many of them it just cost them a lot of money, and the outcome is not what you think it is. It's very expensive. Thank you.

CHRIS PHELPS: Thank you, Senator, and so just two points. One is I agree. This topic is crosscutting. It -- it touches the areas of cognizance of any number of committees in this -- in this legislature -- Environment, Labor, Public Health, Energy, etc. I would agree with that point. It's part of the challenge of this topic broadly, and just the last point. As you probably know, I previously worked as a consumer advocate here in Hartford advocating for consumer protection, so the story you're telling of a -- of a constituent who may have been working or is working with a contractor who did apparently -- I guess the best word for what you described is shotty work -- is disturbing to me. And, you know, obviously would be disturbing I think to anyone, and is not -- that's a consumer protection problem that really ought to be better addressed, obviously, so I'd agree with you that you don't want your roof to leak in order to get clean energy, so thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I think the irony is that -- on that topic is I believe we had a bill last year that was about making sure that people were properly licensed to do that work because an example that was raised with us was a roofing issue, so we may end up returning to that, but in the meantime, let me call on Representative Polletta.

CHRIS PHELPS: Sure.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Thank you, and sir, thank you for being here. Obviously, this is a topic that I'm sure will continue to be had, especially since it's been a national issue, and I think you'd agree with me that, you know, we have people in particular down in D.C., presidential candidates and others that are proclaiming the Green New Deal is the best thing since sliced bread, and I guess that leaves me to my question do you have any idea what something like this could cost the state of Connecticut if enacted?

CHRIS PHELPS: Um, I don't -- off the top of my head, I can't give you a specific number. In terms of -- I'll touch on a few components of the bill.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Sure. Thank you.

CHRIS PHELPS: On the energy side, it's talking about a steady but gradual transition over the course of the next 20 to 30 years from resisting fuel sources to 100 percent clean and renewable fuel sources. Part of the reason for doing that over the course of a period of decades is to manage that transition both from a technological perspective but also an economic perspective that you're eluding to, and what we've seen over the last ten years in particular is renewable energy prices, for example, dropping -- dropping precipitously in Connecticut, New England, and throughout the country, and this bill on that score at least I would hope would anticipate continuing that progress, helping bring down the cost of those energy sources, so things like offshore windmill are actually some of the cheapest electricity sources we have available to us as one example. On the other aspects of the bill, the bill speaks to creating -- and I'm gonna get the names of them wrong, but entities within the

Department of Labor, Department of Energy and Protection to deal with equity and job transition assistance to employees and industries for example. obviously, those could very well have price tags associated with them, but they're pretty important price tags to help people who otherwise would have economic harm and disruption that they would experience as we go through this transition of clean energy economy. I think it's important to -- to recognize that we have a responsibility as a state, as a society to not just say to someone who may be currently today is working repairing oil furnaces to say, hey, you're out of luck. You can't do that work anymore 20 years from now. We need to have an actual answer to the question, well, what -- that that person readily asks, which is what am I gonna do then? And, I think the State of Connecticut has a -- a responsibility and a role to help answer that question. I can't give you the price tag specifically of what that means, but that's part of what's spoken to in this bill, and I think that's because this -- that's an important thing for us to be doing as a state.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Okay. So, --

CHRIS PHELPS: I'm not sure that answers your question directly, but.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Well, I mean personally I don't think anyone can answer what the price tag would be. I mean if you look federally. I mean we have folks saying that they want to get rid of airplanes, and then they're traveling on private jets. We have folks saying that they want everything to be 100 percent renewable, and then you know when they just go against the exact law that

they're advocating for it almost creates discourse and distrust in the public. I mean that's not my opinion, that's fact, but as far as Connecticut would go, if we were to actually change over let's say to electric vehicles, right, the state fleet, right. Is there any idea of how many vehicles that we have in the State of Connecticut that would have to operate electronically rather than now with combustion?

CHRIS PHELPS: For the state fleet, you're referring to?

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Correct. Now, all the cars -- state police and --

CHRIS PHELPS: Yeah.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): You know, all the other vehicles that are under the state of Connecticut. This bill would ultimately call for that to happen, correct?

CHRIS PHELPS: Correct. And, I do know --

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): So -- so there's got to be -- I'm sorry to interrupt you. There has to be an enormous price tag on switching every one of those vehicles over from -- whether it be, you know, overnight or over a period of five years, those vehicles are far more expensive than the regular vehicles, so there has to be some sort of price tag associated with this piece of legislation. There's no way that it's just -- we're not just gonna swap the vehicle out for free.

CHRIS PHELPS: Certainly, if we were to swap over the entire state vehicle fleet overnight, there'd be a huge price tag.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Oh, of course. Right.

CHRIS PHELPS: Yeah, obviously. I do know -- now, I don't know the number of vehicles of the fleet off the top of my head. I do know actually I have that information at my office.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Okay.

CHRIS PHELPS: Because we've been looking at this exact question and checking with folks on it. I do know that DAS is looking at this, and one of the reasons that they're -- they're really excited about a steady and gradual transition basically as existing vehicles in the fleet come out of service -- wherever it's practical in terms of the use of that vehicle to switch it over to electric is because ultimately it can end up saving the state a lot of money because the maintenance cost in those vehicles are far less than the maintenance cost on a traditional internal combustion engine vehicle. I actually drive a plugin hybrid vehicle, and just before I came in here to testify, I ran out to the garage to move it to a charger to plug it in so I can drive home on electricity.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): [Chuckling].

CHRIS PHELPS: One of the reasons I own it is I have to change my oil once every 12 to 15,000 miles, and I'm saving a lot of money doing that, but back to DAS, they're looking at an actual cost savings from transitioning over the course of the next say 10 to 15 years, whatever the date would be from our current fleet to plug in vehicles -- a cost savings to the taxpayer, both through maintenance but also from the fact that you have far -- far reduced fuel costs by a half or more in terms of using

electricity versus gasoline, and lastly, while electric vehicles have been historically more expensive than their, you know, equal counterparts internal combustion vehicles, that's changing pretty dramatically and quickly as well just like with renewable energy. Like I said, I bought -- I own and drive a -- a plugin Ford fusion, and I bought it over the non-plugin version because when I crunched the numbers and did the math, it was cheaper for me to buy and to own that car than to own the gas-powered version of the same exact vehicle, so that transition is happening, and I know DAS is looking at this question through the exact ones you're talking about -- how can we shift to electric vehicles in this state while also reducing cost for the taxpayers?

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): The goal is certainly allottable in the sense that everyone would like to say I'm gonna drive something that's more eco-friendly. I don't think one person in this room and definitely not in this building wants to say I want to pollute the environment more. I don't, you know, no one else does, but the issue is the practicality in the cost. So, I just look at the state police, right. I mean perfect example. The state troopers, many of which I interact with very frequently, and I actually have -- I actually work in a business where my father's a licensed electrician in the State of Connecticut. We install the plugin features for hybrid cars at their homes, so for all these state troopers that take their cars home, if we're gonna switch them over to electric, do they need to get charging stations installed in their house?

CHRIS PHELPS: If you're bringing it home, potentially, yes. And, that's a good example of a -  
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REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Each one of those --  
[Crosstalk].

CHRIS PHELPS: Specific -- [Crosstalk].

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Is over \$3000 to \$4000 dollars. That's just the labor. I mean who knows what the material could be at that time depending on demand and the time and where the house is, how long it takes to run the wiring and where you would plug it in. Is it in the garage, is it outside? So, as you can imagine, this is a -- a very complex issue that someone like me, as a fiscal conservative I like to consider myself, has a hard time supporting because this could end up costing the taxpayers many, many dollars, and we know, you know, federally they're talking like almost \$100 trillion dollars. I don't know what the cost would be in the state of Connecticut, but I'm assuming that of course it won't be that high, but I'm assuming that it would be so large that I don't know how we would -- we would absorb that cost. I mean do you have any knowledge of how maybe here in the State of Connecticut we could save money. I mean, again, I'm going off the example that I just gave. If we're spending all this money installing chargers and you know, we're getting everyone electric vehicles, is that going to show a reduction in cost in our -- in our state government?

CHRIS PHELPS: Yeah. Well, that very specific example you showed obviously is more complex because you have folks taking vehicles home, and then, you know, etc.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Yeah. The broader -- just sticking to electric vehicles for a second -- that broader point about the cost benefits of transitioning larger parts of the state fleet is very real, and like I said, the agencies involved are looking at that, and they look at the numbers, and they're realizing that that transition will save the taxpayers money, and that's a great thing. On the -- on the other point you're raising -- and there is this comparison between -- you know, this bill's entitled AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT, and then of course there's that the Green New Deal proposal in Washington D.C. I will say that there's a little bit of an apples and oranges comparison in terms of the substance of that proposal federally versus what's here. In fact, this is a much more focused and narrow -- focus on how do we transition to clean energy and then how do the Department of Labor and Department of Energy really work -- Environmental Protection -- really work to help manage that transition and it's affects here in Connecticut. There really are a lot of provisions in that federal bill -- in fact, most of that federal proposal for which there's no actual analogous provision in this bill, so the cost comparison I -- I couldn't make -- you know, apples and oranges, but --

CHRIS PHELPS: And, just to -- I wanted to make that point that this is -- while the name is the same --

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Right. That's was my next --

CHRIS PHELPS: A very different set of policy proposals here in Connecticut that are frankly more suitable to our needs here in Connecticut.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Right. So, -- and that brings me to my next point. Through, you know, discussions that I've had, the title itself scares people.

CHRIS PHELPS: Sure.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): The title itself federally really scares the heck out of people like me, but the -- the title in Connecticut in the fiscal climate that we're in and what we're dealing with right now with our unfunded pension and everything else, the deficit after deficit really scares me, and that's why my recommendation would be to change the name of this bill immediately and take the name Green New Deal off of the title for the mere reason that there is a -- a large percentage of the public that's very fearful of what some people are proposing under the federal Green New Deal, and by -- just by taking what you said, and saying that it's apples and oranges -- those are your words --

CHRIS PHELPS: Mm-hm.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Then this -- this bill ought to be changed. Maybe a study or an Act concerning Connecticut's renewable energy or some sort of change in verbiage so that way an individual who's looking at this bill for the first time like I did when it was a concept and looked at it and said, oh, my goodness, we're going to be taking the federal Green New Deal and applying it here to Connecticut, it's somewhat worrisome, and I -- and you admitted, and I'm sure most folks here admit that, you know, we just can't afford that, and we know that it's complex just by some of the examples I gave you a couple moments ago, and it could end up really getting us down the slippery slope here in the State

of Connecticut, one of which I don't think any of us want to go down, especially in the times that we're in, so I'll reserve the rest of my comments, but thank you so much. I'm sorry if I -- I didn't mean to -- to jam you up with the other questions.

CHRIS PHELPS: [Laughing].

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): But, I just wanted to bring some real life samples into play here just to show you where our concerns are coming from. Thank you.

CHRIS PHELPS: Thank you, Representative.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Other questions from the committee? And, I thin it was helpful to know that DAS is looking at this question of the cost -- potential cost savings even when we shift to electrified vehicles, so I think that's something we can get for the committee since it's something they're already working on so I appreciate your suggestion on that. Thank you so much.

CHRIS PHELPS: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Okay. Next up, we have Steve Rosentel from Leahy's Fuels in opposition to 354.

STEVE ROSENTEL: Good afternoon.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I know you're a constituent of mine, and I was looking forward to meeting you. I don't know if it's going to happen today because of --

STEVE ROSENTEL: I think we're scheduled for tomorrow.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Okay. Good. [Laughing].

STEVE ROSENTEL: My name is Steve Rosentel. I'm the President of Leahy's Fuels in Danbury, Connecticut, and my testimony has been submitted. I'm not going to read the testimony given the late hour. Just a couple of points that I want to make. With all do respect to the previous speaker, I've been in the fossil fuels business for over 30 years, and I think there's an awful lot of good things that have happened in our industry in terms of cleaning up the product, increasing efficiencies, and I'd also like to make the point that we have not wedded to selling only fossil fuels. If there was a liquid deliverable fuel that was made from cellulose or some other product that can heat people's homes, we wouldn't be opposed to it. Okay. I'm also here to day that we are in favor of training people to do and handle new technologies. Our industry has a trade school. We have many of the people that are technicians in our industry that have come through that training program. I would like to address one thing that I think is critically important, and that the State of Connecticut and our current administration, DEEP, does not consider lifecycle analysis, and I don't know how scientifically you can attempt to solve a problem without using lifecycle analysis, so I would encourage the state to use that methodology in any kind of a solution that was going to become part of public policy. The issue that we have here in Connecticut is that we're a very small state and the electric grid is regional, so ISO on the Go -- I was looking at while I was sitting here -- is reporting today that natural gas is 54 percent of the fuel mix generating electricity sold in New England right now, 32 percent nuclear, 8 percent hydro, and 7 percent renewables, so if Connecticut were to implement it's

own rules in terms of a Green New Deal, we would be subject to competition in the deliverable fuels business from people coming over the border from New York, in my case, because we're only eight miles from the New York border, and as well-intentioned as Connecticut may be in setting public policy, if we drive up the cost of fuel and doing business in Connecticut, we lose business and jobs to competing states. We can't control what the legislation of New York is gonna do, and they can't control what the legislation of Pennsylvania is going to do, and they can't control what the legislation of Ohio is going to do. The solution to this problem besides lifecycle analysis has got to be done on a federal level. It's also the way to do it to actually get a long-term plan and potentially have the funding and the resources so we're not putting the State of Connecticut and the people who work here and like to continue to call this home at a disadvantage and get you know jobs are being recruited to go to places like Georgia. We've had other companies leaving the state, so I think that's the better solution to the problem. I have two grandchildren two years old and younger, and I look at these babies, and I think that we need to do something and we need to do it soon.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you very much for your testimony. Any questions from my colleagues here? I appreciate the reference at the end to doing something for our future generations, and if eel the same way. Thank you.

STEVE ROSENTEL: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Next up, we have Drew Carlson from Global Company also in opposition to 354.

DREW CARLSON: Thank you, Senator and members of the committee. My name is Drew Carlson from Global Partners. Global owns and operates convenience stores and gas stations in the State of Connecticut, and throughout the Northeast. We also own two bulk petroleum terminals in Bridgeport and Wethersfield. So, again, I don't want to reiterate too much of what was already said. I think that was pretty much covered, but we would be supportive of separating new jobs creation part of the bill from the larger part of the legislation, and handling that with the appropriate committee when the time comes. After speaking with Christopher with the Connecticut Energy Market Association, several other industry colleagues, I think would be more appropriate to deal with another committee on that aspect, but the jobs creation aspect I think we'd be fully supportive of supporting.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Any questions from the committee? I'm seeing none.

DREW CARLSON: Thanks.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thanks for being here and testifying today. Next, we have Ken Coomes from Aldin Association.

KEN COOMES: Hi. Thank you for allowing me to address you today. I will try to be brief. My name is Ken Coomes, and I am here on behalf of Aldin Associates Limited Partnership to voice opposition of proposed Senate Bill 354, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT. Aldin is a third-

generation family-owned Connecticut business. We have been a petroleum marketer and reseller spanning a period of over five decades. In addition to our own stores, the majority of which are operated by small independent business, we also supply approximately 25 independent station owners commonly known as mom and pop dealers. We realize we're an industry in decline. Hydrocarbon-based fuels and the internal combustion engine are slowly dying. Each year volumes decrease as new technologies and renewables emerge. It is inevitable that over time technology will provide cost-effective ways to eliminate the need for hydrocarbon fuels and their result in emissions. That transition is underway and companies like ours either evolve over time or decline until they are no longer relevant. This is happening in an orderly manner under economic circumstances that allow jobs and businesses to adjust. The bill forces changes that can jeopardize that transition at a great cost to jobs, energy, reliability, the local tax base, and the family businesses who have invested in their communities for nearly a century.

Reducing carbon emissions is an admirable goal. This bill, however, places an unfair amount of the expense clearly on the backs of Connecticut residents. Specifically, electric rate payers. This bill embraces electrification and the discontinuance of the diverse energy choices available today. There are many flaws with this legislation as composed. We are basically seating a robust and competitive energy market and placing it solely in the hands of the monopolistic electric utilities. The electrical transmission grid is in even worse shape than our transportation

infrastructure. Without substantial and costly upgrade, service disruption will be emanant and frequent. Imposition of substantial carbon taxes will be erroneus to low and middle income tax-payers of Connecticut in addition to carbon taxes, rate increases imposed by electric utilities will be staggering only adding to the highest electric cost in the country.

This legislation clearly picks winners and losers that will result in every expanding government bureaucracy that could likely impede the development of new technologies. We are currently seeing controlled migration to alternative fuel and electric vehicles. It's a steady progression that grows larger each year. Sometimes good intentions have unintended consequences. The known consequences of this bill are frightening enough for me. For these reasons, I ask that you oppose proposed Senate Bill 354.

One additional thing I would like to add is this is the Labor Committee. When I was 16 years old my first job was pumping gas at the gas station, and I managed to carry that forward to a lifelong career in the industry. Gas stations and convenience stores in perspective, in my opinion, are a great source of entry-level jobs for young people. The other thing that happens is there is typically a codependency between petroleum marketing and convenience stores. Typically, businesses cannot exist by just the sale of gasoline and diesel fuel. It has to be intertwined, so what could happen is that a number of convenience stores would subsequently go out of business. People will be charging their electric vehicles at home. There won't be the need to go visit the convenience store

and get gas, and as these retail outlets decline, you're going to be adding to empty real estate and kind of a blithe of retail -- empty retail space that we're seeing develop, which is very troubling.

And, in that, I again would like to thank you and would be happy to address any questions or comments you may have.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you for your testimony. Members of the committee? Okay. I'm seeing none. Thank you so much for coming up today.

KEN COOMES: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I know we had skipped over David Gable. Is he here now? Oh, you're David Gable?

DAVID GABLE: I am.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Okay. Come on up. Thank you. This is David Gable from -- is it -- how do you pronounce the name of your business?

DAVID GABLE: Uh, Gable.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): No. Of your business. I saw it here. It's written and it is Hacon.

DAVID GABLE: Yes. Hocon Gas.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Hocon Gas. Okay. Thank you.

DAVID GABLE: I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to get up here. So, I guess I'll read my testimony, Senator. And, I am David Gable. I'm the President of Hocon Gas. We're a third-generation Shelton, Connecticut-based family-owned propane distributor employing 120 people with

operations in Danbury, Gilford, Norwalk, Suffield, Torrington, and Waterbury.

Although, I applaud the -- the committee for taking air quality and global warming very seriously, in my opinion, Senate Bill 354 fails to take a lot -- much into consideration. This state already pays the second highest electricity rate in the nation with the first being Hawaii. A condition of our existing power distribution grid is aging, and its condition is tenuous, and the cost to upgrade that grid will be enormous. Connecticut has not fared well regard to the unemployment statistics since the last stock market correction in 2008, and I feel legislation such as this will further increase the cost of living here preventing the growth we so desperately need, on unfairly burdened low-income and retired residents, further pushing them to leave. Although our main business is supplying propane for conventional uses such as heat, water, and cooking, propane is extensively used for backup power generation when a grid fails for combined heat power systems and for internal combustion engines. If this legislation were to put the propane business out of business, who will be there to rise to the occasion to assist the state municipalities and homeowners with fuel for those generators in times of need? What is going to power the electric chargers being installed around the state if the power grid goes down? People with electric cars in California were stranded when a grid was preemptively shut down. A gas furnace today is approximately -- is roughly 96 percent efficient, and although electricity is 100 percent efficient at the point of use, a power plant is generally 25-30 percent efficient, and the wires which carry the

power to the end user lose about 75 percent of the energy it's intended to deliver. Although the intent of this proposed legislation is to reduce the amount of carbon being released by fossil fuels, the propane and fuel industries are hard at work to come up with biobased products as well.

Currently, bio-propane is being produced in Europe at a plant in Amsterdam, one in Louisiana, and another in Los Angeles. Bill Gates, along with Michael Bloomberg and Richard Branson are working on a synthetic palm oil product to replace the palm oil being used to displace the trans-fat food -- trans-fats in our food, which may be suitable also for replacing diesel fuel in the near future. And, current model Bluebird propane-powered school buses are already 90 percent cleaner than current 2020 clean diesel standards. Those propane buses, which have replaced diesel buses in some 12 Connecticut towns and cities, cost about \$100,000 dollars. A similar electric school bus is \$300,000 dollars and it uses diesel fuel for heat. What board of education can afford to spend that kind of money on a school bus? The short answer to date is none.

I agree we should all be concerned with global warming and rising sea levels. I am. But, this legislation picks winners and losers, and the science may just not yet be there to make a determination that an all-electric world will answer our problems. I'd be happy to take any questions.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you very much for coming here and testifying today. Any questions? Thank you for being here, though.

DAVID GABLE: I appreciate it. Thank you for the time.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): All right. My mic wasn't on, but you heard me Natalie, right? Natalie Ochoa, and you're from Connecticut Citizen Action, correct?

NATALIE OCHOA: Mm-hm. Hi. My name is Natalie Ochoa, and I'm a high school senior, Latina, and the future of this country. Thank you for allowing me to speak on this issue and in support of the Green New Deal. Climate change and the danger it presents is the cause and anxiety and deep worry for young people today. Here are some of the facts about our current crisis:

According to the 2018 study entitled Global Warming of 1.5 Celsius degrees from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, there will be catastrophic consequences if the United States does not reduce it's overall carbon emissions by 40 percent by 2030, and the point of no return, is set to occur in 2040 if global temperatures increase by 1.5 degrees when it will be virtually impossible to reverse the effects of climate change. The 2014 study entitled Salt Marsh Advancement Along Connecticut's Coast, has predicted that by 2080 the State of Connecticut will lose 24,000 acres of land; 29.4% of this land consists of homes, businesses, and roads. Sections of Interstate-95 will be flooded twice a day and Connecticut will be the most impacted state, besides Florida, by climate change.

This is what we are up against. As a senior, I am currently in the college application process. Although I would love to sit here and speak with a smile on my face and be happy about my future, I have to face this horrifying reality. I want to run for office one day, advocate for marginalized communities, and improve the lives of my fellow

Americans, but my efforts will be a waste if within a few generations this planet will be uninhabitable. This thought keeps me up at night. Although I believe that this bill does not go far enough to address the urgency of this crisis, I believe it is a good start. This bill represents the bare minimum, but it is better to move forward with these goals than to continue in our current state. This legislation will expand the renewable energy industry, and create new jobs in the sector. This country will and is currently heading towards a major expansion of the renewable energy industry, and Connecticut should be at the forefront.

In addition, it will also encourage Connecticut students to pursue a career in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to work in the clean energy industry. If students see that adults, especially state politicians, are recognizing the urgency of this crisis and are taking measures to expand the renewable energy industry, they will pursue careers in this field, which will generate a new generation of engineers. Finally, I know that this is the Labor Committee, and that I was focusing mainly on the environment, we need to make sure we have a just transition for workers so that when the dangers of climate change become more urgent, workers are able to join a booming renewable energy industry. I would also like to say that even though this is the Labor Committee, you all are still adults, and you still have the responsibility to younger generations to sustain a clean planet the older generations have been able to enjoy. The cost of this transition will be high, but it will be even higher when our infrastructure, homes, buildings,

schools, and so on are destroyed due to climate change. Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you, Ms. Ochoad. Any questions? I do I want to thank you for being here, and I -- I do appreciate the concern that you have raised here about future generations, and I know others have testified. Both people in favor of this bill and people who are opposed to this bill have expressed concern about climate change here today, which is a start, by the way, because not everybody even agrees on that, but I do feel like your concern that you raised and your anxiety is something serious that we need to pay attention to. I -- I was struck by the number of young people when I went door-to-door when I was campaigning to be an elected official. I often would encounter very young kids and always engage them in conversation, and when I'd ask you know if you could change one thing what would it be? Almost invariably it was climate -- the climate change issue, which I thought was really amazing to me, and I do think we as adults have responsibility. There's a lot about energy and environment that I don't know. I'm not an expert in that field, but I do know from my experience that we do have to think about -- we have to make change quickly. From everything I've read that I believe in, this is something we don't have a choice about, and so I appreciate you being here and underscoring that for us because, you know, I'm on the older end of things here, but I do have kids and grandkids that I want to reassure that we're paying attention.

And, in terms of the job piece of it, you know, I think -- I have worked my whole life to protect worker's rights. That's the work that I did. That's the work that I still embrace, and so when

someone says we're going to put people out of work if we make this transition, you know, I take -- I take great concern at that. We cannot move forward as a state without paying attention to what we're doing to the current workforce and making sure that we're planning for the transition, so one of the early -- one of the speakers right before you said that even though he might not agree with the entire bill, he's in support of that notion that we have to be cognizant of how we're going to move forward and protect jobs and create good jobs. So, I appreciate you being here today. You've been here all day. I know I saw you first thing this morning, so thank you for participating in this discussion, and it's always impressive when we have high school students that are paying that close attention to what we are doing up here. We -- we really appreciate that. Thank you.

NATALIE OCHOA: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Any other comments? Okay. Thank you, and next up, we have Louis Rosado Burch.

LOUIS ROSADO BURCH: Thank you, Senator Kushner, Representative Polletta, Representative Winkler. I appreciate you all being here to hear this testimony. My name is Louis Rosado Burch. I'm the Connecticut Program Director for Citizen's Campaign for the Environment. I've submitted comments for the record, and I would like to just kind of summarize and touch on a few points.

First of all, I couldn't agree more with the young lady who spoke right before me. The impacts of climate change are disproportionately being felt and born by low and moderate-income communities, and we've been talking a lot about short-term costs,

investments, short-term job loss today, but I think it's necessary to kind of refrain this conversation. We are talking about an existential crisis. We are in the throws of a climate emergency. Here in Connecticut, that can be observed through intermittent droughts, sea level rise, and invading our costal communities and localize impacts to public health and biodiversity, and that's why it's so important that we take -- not only take an action on climate change, but that we take aggressive action. There's been a lot of talk about this bill as something that's going to put lots of folks in Connecticut out of work. I would argue that the focus may be in the wrong place, and one of the reasons why this bill is so important is because it does create the Just Transition Office to establish a process to provide workforce training, apprenticeship programs, and so forth for folks that are negatively impacted by this legislation. It would also dedicate significant amount of that work to environmental justice communities that once again are bearing the brunt of these climate impacts. And, so while Senate Bill 354 does aim to do a lot of this important work, many environmental advocates have said that it may not go far enough, that what we need to be doing is pushing aggressively towards 100 percent clean energy in a shorter timeframe, and I agree with a lot of that, but what you have in this bill is something that we view as reasonable. It provides interim targets to meet existing clean energy goals that are already in statute, and it provides a framework to actually offer some support and equity training programs, these types of things for skilled workers in Connecticut that may in fact be affected by this.

Furthermore, I'd like to say that we're in good company. What you all are proposing is not that far out of the realm of what our neighboring states are doing. New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island all have goals to produce -- to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050. New York State has a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 85 percent by the year 2050 with net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Furthermore, this legislation also provides extremely important accountability measure that will require future decisions to be consistent with the standards set out in Section 1, and this is critical because we can put standards in place and say we need to reach 100 percent renewable energy by a date certain, but if every other action that the state takes is not consistent with those goals and standards, then we really have no guarantee that we're ever going to get there in the timeframe that's been -- that's been specified by the law.

Furthermore, it creates a statewide greenhouse gas emissions inventory to track our progress and to help drive future decision making around energy resources and their use and their development here in the State of Connecticut, so I think that this is a commonsense approach to drilling down on some of our existing clean energy goals. There is more that we could be doing in this respect, but this is a great opportunity for this committee to do something good on this issue. We support the bill, and we urge you all to support its passage as well.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Questions for Mr. Burch? I -- I appreciate the summary you gave of the bill because I think it helps put it in perspective, and

you know, I think that it is a big bill. It has a lot of components to it, but keeping in mind how each of the pieces fit together I think is important. I know for me, you know, I have the opportunity to hear from you, another committee I serve on, so I have met you before and your comments about these issues, but I think being here in Labor it has been very helpful today to her people pull together the different pieces of this that relate to energy, that relate to the environment, and that relate to the future economy of our state, so I appreciate you doing that very distinctly in your testimony today. Thank you.

LOUIS ROSADO BURCH: Thank you. Thank you for your kind words, and if I could just say one other thing in response to that?

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Sure.

LOUIS ROSADO BURCH: I mean I don't want to come across as flippant or insensitive to the needs of those hardworking folks here in Connecticut, and that's one of the reasons why we think this is so critical. We're all going to suffer the impacts of climate change regardless of whether or not you believe in anthropogenic climate change. We know that burning fossil fuels has really, really profound impacts on public health, especially in our disadvantaged communities, and so we want to bring those folks with us. We want them to be an active part of this process. They deserve good paying jobs just like anybody else, and so we believe that this legislation will help facilitate that process in a meaningful way.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I think -- you -- you reminded me. I've always felt this way. I

mentioned to the early -- to the previous speaker that I have fought all my life for worker's rights, and for good jobs with good benefits, and -- and so it -- it does seem that sometimes I am put in this position or we all are put in this position where it looks like we are advocating for something that's going to put people out of work, and I like the parts -- the thing I really like about this bill is that it's projecting our concern for the workers, for the people that are currently employed, and making sure that they're part of the solution and part of going forward because they have kids and they have grandkids. One of the earlier speakers who's in the fuel industry -- I noticed at the end and I'm sure you all noted that he said, "I have grandkids", so we all really -- I mean this shouldn't be a choice for us. We all have an investment in making sure that we're addressing these concerns. We just have to make sure we're bringing people with us, and not -- we're not at odds with those folks that we are in it together.

LOUIS ROSADO BURCH: Thank you, Senator. We appreciate your thoughtful advocacy on this issue.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Next up, we have Charles Rothenberger, Connecticut Fund for Environment, also on 354.

CHARLES ROTHENBERGER: Senator Kushner, Representative Polletta, Representative Winkler, and members of the Labor Committee. My name is Charles Rothenberger. I'm the climate and energy attorney with Connecticut Fund for the Environment and Save the Sound. I'd like to begin by thanking you for raising this very important bill, which reaffirms the state's longstanding commitment to addressing

climate change, by updating the state's current Global Warming Solutions Act, and ensuring that Connecticut's workforce is poised to take advantage of the burgeoning clean energy economy, which we see developing around us even today.

The targets set forth in this legislation are in accord with the best of what the best of science indicates is absolutely necessary to avoid the worst impact of climate change, and many jurisdictions at the national and subnational level including within the United States as well as a growing number of major companies have already set or are working on establishing zero emission targets, and while much of the discussion will and has focused on the cost of taking the necessary actions to mitigate climate change, we also need to consider the cost of it in action. The less we invest in mitigation, the more expensive our adaptation costs will be, and we will face them. We will also face the question of what impacts we must adapt to. Is it the impacts in 2030, the impacts in 2040, another date? Without strong mitigation action, the cost and uncertainty of these adaptation investments will rise while at the same time, we'll be dealing with the inevitable adverse consequences of climate change and the toll that such consequences will take on our citizens, and at the same time, we are going to be foregoing the economic benefits of investing in these -- these efforts.

As part of the Governor's council on climate change, they did an economic analysis of the impact of reaching our 45 percent reduction target by 2030, and that analysis found using a very well-established model that in fact taking those actions would create 22,000 more jobs per year between 2020

and 2030, and increase the gross domestic product in the state by 2.34 billion each year over the baseline of taking no action, and hopefully avoiding some of the expenses dealing with hurricanes and other natural disasters. So, we have to continue to lead in this aspect. We believe this bill is good for Connecticut's environment to help with its population and the economy, and it truly represents a win/win scenario.

And, I'll just end by noting that we recognize we do have to invest in our electricity grid, and those efforts are currently under way. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority has a number of dockets open looking at grid modernization here in the state of Connecticut with the focus on accommodating growing numbers of EDs, incorporating battery storage into the electricity distribution system, grid inter -- interconnection standards for more distributed renewable energy resources, and DEEP is also exploring as part of its integrated resource plan developing a thermal RPS for the state to deal with building heating and cooling. And, I just want to note in 30 seconds that this bill is technology neutral. A lot of people have focused on the electrification side, and that likely will be an important pathway moving forward, but there's nothing in the legislation that mandates that electrification pathway. Really, what we feel this bill does is set the appropriate market signals to unleash innovative solutions to meet the targets that we have here, and if there are liquid fuels that can help us achieve our goals, bring them on. So, thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you for that clarification, and again, bringing us back to what's

in this bill because sometimes I think we're responding to that -- as Representative Polletta pointed out earlier -- we're responding to things we might be thinking about the national bill or the federal bill, or we might be thinking about things we've read in the media and not really focusing on the bill itself, so that was also very helpful to me, so I appreciate that. Questions from the committee? Well, thank you very much for being here today.

CHARLES ROTHENBERG: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Next up, we have Ann Gadwah, and also on 354.

ANN GADWAH: Thank you. My name is Ann Gadwah. Thank you, Senator Kushner, Representative Polletta, and Representative Winkler for allowing me to testify here today. I'm testifying on Senate Bill 354, AN ACT CONCERNING A GREEN NEW DEAL. I'm a lot of things in this life. I'm a mother and a wife, an environmental activist, a citizen of Connecticut in the United States, and an inhabitant of planet earth. I've been an environmental activist since 1989 when the Exxon Valdez oil spill happened. I knew then as I know now that we have a huge impact on what happens to all other life on earth and we do will affect the planet, and we must act responsibly and justly to take care of the only home we have. I have been a mother since 2012. My son's name is Ben, and I'm terrified about what kind of world we are leaving him. The climate crisis is already here, and if we do nothing to curb it, it will only get worse, and his life will be significantly harder than ours is now. Where will he live? What will he eat? Will he have clean water? Will there be

conflict and wars due to resource shortages? What kind of jobs will be available to him? What kind of society will he live in? But, this is all on a personal level.

I also support this bill because I care tremendously for Connecticut, and for the people that live here, and I also care about the big picture of preserving life as we know it on earth. I support Senate Bill 354 because it not only lays out a path for Connecticut to meet its mandated greenhouse reduction goals, but also sets a goal for the state of 100 percent clean renewable energy by 2050. This is in line with the IPCC recommendations to keep temperature rise to a minimum, and to curve all those terrible things that could happen due to climate change. It is our moral responsibility to act as quickly as possible.

So, we must move to a clean and renewable energy economy. The economy of the future. So, how are we going to do this and adjust an equitable way? How can we make sure that all those workers that would be affected by moving away from the fossil fuel industry are going to be okay? Well, this bill provides retraining for those workers and training for the workers of the future. It guarantees that the new jobs created will be good jobs with prevailing wage and project labor agreements. This bill also goes a long way in addressing historical inequities and environmental injustices. Often a community is affected most by the fossil fuel economies are those least responsible for it. I find this terrible. That because some communities are seen as not having as much power or money, their health and climate are not as important as others. This bill begins to correct this. It provides

dedicated investments to these communities both to address the inequitable portion of the pollution these communities have endured and to provide the opportunity to benefit from the training and the jobs this bill will create.

Finally, hold the rest of the state agencies and the General Assembly accountable for their actions in regards to greenhouse gas emissions, making sure everyone is on the same page, and that the state has full buy in from the entire government. This is a really good thing. how can we expect the citizens of the state to be dedicated to changing their own behavior if those elected to represent them do not? This bill puts Connecticut on a path to the future. People want to live in a state that's forward-thinking, so let's do our part to mitigate the climate crisis, create a new economy that works and includes everyone, correct historical injustices, and holds everyone accountable. I thank you for your time and will answer any questions.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Members of the committee, do you have any questions?  
Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): One question. The problem of retraining -- it seems to me that the rate of change is increasing and dislocations are going to be enormous in the near future, but I don't know if as -- as human beings we're ready to admit that we need to be retrained for a different job. Are you more optimistic than I am about how that will be received?

ANN GADWAH: I suppose I am. I suppose I'm coming at it from a sense of that we're going to have to change, so personally, I would like to see it be I

guess -- I guess as least painful as possible is not necessarily the way to put it, but as -- as helping as many people along as we possibly can, so I guess I am optimistic. Thank you.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Well, actually, I'm grateful someone is.

ANN GADWAH: [Laughing].

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): All right, Representative Winkler. I'm still optimistic too. [Laughing]. I actually think that there is an opportunity. You know, it's often said that where you see challenges you can also see opportunities, and I think that a lot of what's been talked about today, both by the previous speaker, Mr. Rothenberger who talked about you know the opportunity that there will be new technologies that will grow out of finding solutions -- innovative and creative solutions to the current crisis that we have. I also believe it's an opportunity to reset on the justice issues that you've raised, and look at ways we can address injustices that have occurred in the past by being more thoughtful and more proactive in addressing the communities that have been maybe hurt the most, so I think that I too am an optimist, Representative Winkler. That's why I'm serving here in this legislature. [Laughing]. Otherwise, I would be on vacation. So, thank you very much. Other questions or comments? I don't know. I'd be in retirement is what I should have said, not vacation. Thank you very much for coming here today and testifying.

ANN GADWAH: Thank you very much.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Next up, we have Jennifer Siskind. Is Jennifer here? Yes.

JENNIFER SISKIND: Good afternoon, Honorable Chair Senator Kushner, Ranking Members Miner -- Senator Miner, and Representative Polletta, and members of the committee. I am not optimistic. [Laughing]. To put it blankly. I do support this bill. I am not really thrilled with the benchmarks that are listed in it. I don't think they move fast enough for what scientists are telling us we need to do. However, I am a big supporter of numerous components of the bill. The accountability of state agencies to act consistently with the targets that have been recently redirected for the State of Connecticut. We passed targets decades ago, and then nothing ever happened. Very little actually was done, so I appreciate that part.

The climate impact statements, the Just Transition Office to assist workers, and -- but -- and I have another -- many other points that will be posted in testimony, but to speak personally, my family income is higher than the median income for Connecticut, and already my husband and I we own a home, we've paid for an energy assessment, we've replaced old windows and doors, we've installed solar panels. We've added insulation to our attic, and we've both been able to purchase new electric cars. This has resulted in enormous energy savings for both our home and our transportation costs, but we are an income minority in this state, and unless we start helping moderate and low-income people making similar transitions, we're not gonna make any achievement goals that are adequate to impact emissions in our state, so that is why I'd like to see my tax dollars used to help the larger majority

of Connecticut residents, particularly those who have been living in economic justice communities for years. The payback benefits include savings to fuel-assistance programs, healthcare costs, other items that are subsidized already by my tax dollars, so I see it as a -- as a win.

I volunteer for the Food and Water Watch, and we worked for seven years just to try to prevent fossil fuels from contaminating our water here in Connecticut by banning the waste from cracking from being imported into Connecticut. We don't have seven years to make headway with renewable energy in Connecticut, and that's why I'm not optimistic because I'm not sure that we're really gonna get there.

But, there are some comments that I'd like to refute that have been made, particularly some comments about propane. It takes two seconds to go to a U.S. Department of Energy website and see that propane has a 139 pounds of Co2 emitted per British thermal units compared to natural gas of 117 pounds emitted, so buses run on five miles per gallon in average in the state, so yes. You can spend three times as much for an electric bus, but the amount that you're saving in the additional cost of maintenance and buying fuel to repeatedly run these buses make a difference.

The town of Westport is an excellent example to look at.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Can I just interrupt you for a minute?

JENNIFER SISKIND: Sure.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Because we are actually getting through our list today, so -- but I also want to pay attention to the timeline, so I am going to stop you for a minute and ask you a question.

JENIFER SISKIND: Truly.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Are there other things you'd like to repute that were said earlier today? [Laughing]. [Laughter].

JENNIFER SISKIND: Um, well --

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): No. Go ahead. I'm just trying to make sure that you're answering a question at this point.

JENNIFER SISKIND: Sure. Some comments about what are the costs going to be for our state troopers. The town of Westport is a good example. If you look at the extensive amount of solar panels that they have already installed on carport canopies that go over parking areas they're able to charge their electric vehicles with solar, and their newest police car is a Tesla 3, and with the built in GPS system, the cost savings for reduced maintenance, and the cost savings for being able to charge on solar panels, Westport is coming ahead of the deal in purchasing that car.

And I -- and I agree with the comments that were made about looking at the total lifespan of fuel. If you look at just two plants that it take to produce propane, you're talking about first you have to process the raw natural gas in a processing plant, and then you have to send the natural gas liquids to a fractionator plant to separate propane, ethane, and butane out from each other. Just two plants to produce some propane produces hundreds of

thousands of tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year, and every time they're using propane you're having to repute all that amount of emissions into the air just to be able to process and create propane, so you know, sometimes you get information about oh well we're doing so much for -- for you know clean air because we're not burning dung, and propane is much cleaner, but that's looking at a tiny little sliver of what happens to air quality when you -- when you produce propane.

Quite honestly, everybody who's living in the Kongo and everybody who's living within the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn are going to be migrating in coming decades. It's gonna be too hot for them to live where they currently are now, and those economic costs, the burdens that's going to put with climate refugees and the burdens that are going to be put on Connecticut with the loss of tax base from our towns that are going to be demolished by storm surges and our infrastructure, our port systems in the city of Bridgeport and New Haven and New London alone -- this is what keeps me up at night or wakes me up early in the morning and has me worrying about not only where my children are going to be -- they're in their early 20s, but where are my retirement income investments gonna be just within a couple decades because of the loss of revenue and the economic uncertainty that we're gonna be facing.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Any questions from committee members? Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): So, we've both been on the exact same webpage today.

JENNIFER SISKIND: [Laughing].

REP. WINKLER (56TH): And, my question of you is are the -- it's kind of an unfair question. The numbers that we've heard, the stuff we have seen, and yes. They are comparing it to wood burning and other things, but is it that -- that they're just squinting at the numbers and looking at them in a cheery manner, or are -- are they taking advantage of ignorant legislators?

JENNIFER SISKIND: [Sigh]. I think that you're getting cherrypicked information that diverts your attention some place else and keeps you from keeping your eyes on the prize and seeing the entire picture. You know, it's like we're gonna concentrate on this one tree in the forest, and what we really have to look at is fossil fuels as the entire forest, and you know, quite honestly people are going to have to transition from their jobs, and no. They don't want to transition from their jobs, and that's why they're all showing up here opposing this bill because they want to keep their biodiesel and their propane delivery services, and their oil companies, and their energy companies that are burning fossil fuels in power plants. They do not want to transition, but you know, at one point, seven years ago when I started volunteering with Food and Water Watch, I said to a 30-year-old staff person, "How do you keep at it year after year after year seeing the -- you know what gets bogged down in legislation and never goes forward? How do you keep fighting this fight?" And, her response was, "Well, what -- what choice do I have." And, you know, that's my response to opposition to this bill. What choice do we have? The choices that we're gonna look at is the new train station recently built in New Haven is going to be under water in

several decades. We're not going to be able to deliver any goods or commerce to our port systems in the State of Connecticut. We're gonna have to replace our Amtrak line and take land by emanant domain away from other homeowners and move all these newly funded train stations that are being built along the shoreline. We are gonna have a lost tax based not only from shoreline communities but also communities -- I live in Glastonbury. We've got tidal flooding on the Connecticut River that's gonna impact my town and all the towns along the Connecticut River that are gonna be impacted by tidal flooding. So, -- and that's -- that's just one river in Connecticut, so you know, it goes beyond being able to build a concrete seawall and protect your community. It's not -- we're not gonna be able to do that, so we have to look at major strategies. Yes, it is a huge endeavor, and it's very difficult, but it's gonna need to be done, and I don't live on the shoreline, but my town's gonna be impacted, but even if I move to higher ground -- if I move to Litchfield, I would still be impacted because the tax base in my town is gonna dramatically change when we no longer have these high-income homes along the Connecticut shoreline, and we've lost our commercial base in all of our port cities.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Well, let me be the voice of optimism for just a minute. The fabled Northwest Passage is going to open up.

JENNIFER SISKIND: [Laughing].

REP. WINKLER (56TH): So, in your future, the ideal future, the one you envision based on hope; do you see biofuel being used, or do you think that's going

to be solar and wind -- solar rays for communities plus wind?

JENNIFER SISKIND: We need to transition to 100 percent electric energy, and we need to do that with solar, wind power, and small-scale title energy in Connecticut. That's already been figured out for us by economists and physicists, and other experts at -- in California. They've mapped out every state, and they -- and they did that years ago, so that is our only means to an energy future if we're going to be addressing climate change, and unfortunately --

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you.

JENNIFER SISKIND: The State of Connecticut, by the way, our -- our renewable portfolio -- anyways, our portfolio of renewables in Connecticut -- Food and Water Watch gave Connecticut -- I believe -- a C-rating, maybe even a D+ rating because one of the things that we're counting as our renewables are burning biodiesels. We can't be burning things anymore. We have to be producing energy off of natural resources, solar, air, and water.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Other questions or comments? Okay. Thank you very much for testifying today.

JENNIFER SISKIND: Thank you for your time today.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Appreciate it.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Next up, we have Jonathan Shaer from NECSEMA. Are you here, Jonathan? Okay. We will skip over to Melinda Tuhust [phonetic], 350 Connecticut. Okay. I know Roger is here. Roger

Senserrich from Working Families. You have to push on your mic.

ROGER SENSERRICH: My voice is a bit shot, sorry, at times. My name is Roger Senserrich. I'm the Communications Director at Working Families. We are a statewide organization that is seeking to create a democracy that suits everyone, and with an economy that doesn't leave anyone behind. We submitted written testimony. I don't want to repeat much of what is already written. I want to stress out something that has been -- that has come up during the discussion that is important to mention that this is one of the rare pieces of legislation that doing nothing else has cost. So, most bills when you pass legislation expanding Medicaid or building a hospital, building a road, because of fiscal note, the bill doesn't pass. That's fine. In this case, if we don't pass the bill, that has cost, and we are seeing that cost already. The climate process is here. We are seeing increased coastal flooding all across the state. We already had two big storms that damaged a lot of properties on the shoreline. We are seeing flooding -- so water flooding, tidal flooding that is going -- going to increase in the coming years. Flood insurance premiums are increasing, and that's in small part because of climate change. It's already here. It's already costing us money.

We keep getting asked what more money to -- or increasing the bills to fill the gaps created by storms that are damaging electric utilities. That's part of climate change cost thus far. I have a 3-year-old daughter. She is going to be bearing a lot of that -- of that price tag. If we don't pass a legislation, this is going to be expensive. Someone

is going to be paying for it. What we want to do with this bill, what we want to do with this Green New Deal bill is to make sure that we -- we are taking care of this now. That we are actually not letting this climate crisis become a huge increasing amount of price taking form of climate disruption, disaster response that cannot produce anymore, forest fires -- wild fires that are back in Connecticut forests. And, we know we can do that. We can do that because we -- we already have been transitioning a lot of our infrastructure to lower carbon methods.

There was a piece not long ago that states in the regime the regional electric compact for Northeastern states have to decrease their emissions for electric generation by 47 percent in ten years. All that without actually having the economy's support of the region and grow faster than the country as a whole. And, we have been doing this because we live in a market economy that is real efficient. Once you tell -- put the right incentives in place to actively move the economy from something that is expensive, that has a lot of external cost like carbon, like global warming. We should shoot for sources of things that are going to do the same thing with less. We are seeing this with electrification, and we can see this across the board. We can see this with transportation. We can see this with home heating. We can see this in other sectors of the economy. I'll be happy to take any questions.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): And, I know this has been asked, but I'm gonna ask it again. You're a new witness, so we can ask your take on this, and I think Representative Polletta, you had been

concerned about this in previous questions that you asked. In moving to electrification, there has been a fear that we would end up with higher costs for people to heat their homes because of the cost of electricity, and so I wondered if -- and that's something you raised, right, and I'm wondering if you -- [Background conversing] -- you raised the cars, right. The changing over of the cars, but I thought maybe it was someone else here raised the issue of the cost of -- the increased cost to rate payers. Maybe it was one of our witnesses who actually brought that up in terms of electricity. I wonder if you could address that?

ROGER SENSERRICH: Well, I mean the cost is going to be there no matter what. If we don't do the transition, we are going to see -- we are going to see maybe lower heating cost because global warming. We are going to spend a lot more money in air conditioning every -- every summer. We are going to have increased impacts on our healthcare system because heatwaves have really huge impacts in the elderly population in this state, and we've seen in other countries how unexpected heatwaves have costs thousands of deaths. France had a couple of really bad years in the past decade just because of heatwaves that -- that country is not used to have, so it's not that not addressing this problem make -- makes things not be expensive. It's that they are going to be much more expensive in other place. I mean places that we cannot control, so it's -- it's a bill that we need to take action for now because we are going to be reacting to this no matter what.

In terms of home heating costs, the one thing that we know is that once we tell entrepreneurs -- when we tell investors to come up with new ideas, to do

things cheaper with less, they do. And, we have been seeing this in one sector after the other in the economy. For -- for cars, it has been really clear. Cars are much more energy efficient. They get much better mileage now than they get any time in the past. Electrification is something that has happened, and we are seeing electric cars that are viable, and this has started to happen in the last ten years, and it's mostly because finally when we -- investors get their mind set in actively trying to get something done, they do. So, it's not that -- maybe some of the solutions are not immediately visible now, but the technology that's going to be coming up, and we already know a lot of how the things are going to be looking at. We know that insulation makes a big difference. We know that solar roof tiles are going to become cheaper as time goes by. We have the cost of solar panels have been going down, so electrifying houses is going to be much cheaper, at times are much more efficient than -- than they have -- than they used to. We have a 30-year timed horizon to actually get those emissions to zero, and we know that if that's what we are supposed to do, and there is a business of 484 people to actively get this done, we are going to have those savings.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you very much, and thanks for being here today.

ROGER SENSERRICH: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Next up, we have Tom Swan from Citizen Action Group -- Connecticut Citizen Action Group.

TOM SWAN: Good afternoon, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, other members of the Labor

and Public Employees' Committee. My name is Tom Swan. I'm the Executive Director of the Connecticut Citizen Action Group. On behalf of our thousands of members statewide, I want to thank you for raising Senate Bill 354, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CONNECTICUT. I've heard a lot said today questioning whether or not this is a bill that should be for this committee, and I want to make clear on behalf of our members, this is a bill that should be before this committee. If we're not dealing with the new economy that we're gonna need in terms of dealing with climate change upfront, in terms of how we're gonna deal with workers and employment, and how we're gonna reverse our long legacy of racism in this state, then you're -- we and you are not doing the job we need to do. I want to applaud you for bringing forward the most comprehensive proposal for the looming climate catastrophe we have seen in this legislature, and the first one centered on the need to build a different economy that -- that emphasizes the creation of living wage jobs and addressing our legacy of racism. It is also the first legislative policy that is prioritizing engaging frontline advocates instead of corporate interests in its development. I was shocked at some of the mistruths that were given today by the opponents from the fossil fuel industry in terms of trying to debate this here. I was surprised to hear that in Connecticut, as state where our last Republican governor had the same commissioner of DEEP that President Barack Obama had for EPA, would bring up falsehoods like their people are calling for no airplanes and flying around in private jets. That's something that you only hear on like Alex Jones or maybe a bad Ruch Limbaugh show.

This proposal that you put forward needs to be taken very seriously. It establishes goals on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in transportation, housing, and energy sectors. It increase the accountability including climate impact statements on all legislation and making sure that all of our state agencies are helping to advance these goals. It deals -- it creates an Office of Just Transition to help people transferring in jobs but also help train and develop people to take the jobs of the future that are going to give us the green economy, that are going to save efficiency, is going to retool our buildings. It addresses environmental equity in a manner that ensures low-income residents of community of color who have traditionally been asked to pay for but not equitably benefit from clean energy programs, benefit from the efforts in terms of access to programs, training, and jobs. It's the strongest proposal on this front we have seen in the legislature, and provides a fantastic roadmap for moving forward.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you very much for your testimony today. Any questions?  
Representative Polletta.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Thank you, and I -- I have to respond. I know you were referring to some of my comments. First of all, through the speaker here, do you have an idea of how much this will cost?

TOM SWAN: Um, yeah. It's gonna cost a hell of a lot less than inaction. If you look right now at current events going on, I'm not gonna sit here because I'm not like just an ideologue. But, there is -- we know that because of climate change there's

gonna be a higher likelihood of pandemics. We know because of climate change there's gonna be a higher degree of tornados. All one has to do is turn on the tv right now, and watch the effect of the virus -- Coronavirus is having on our economy. Look at the 19 deaths already in Tennessee from tornados today. The cost of failing to act is going to be much greater than acting, and let me also say that the cost of renewable energy is coming down. Somebody that's been around as long as me never -- never would have been taken seriously if had said we were gonna pay for wind energy what we paid with groceries and bids five years ago. Nobody was projecting except for the environmentalist that we were gonna see the decline in the cost of solar and the increase in terms of the ability for battery storage.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Sir. I just have -- [Crosstalk].

TOM SWAN: This bill in acting now will cost less than inaction by far.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Okay. And, through the Chair, are you insinuating that the Coronavirus was a direct result of global warming?

TOM SWAN: I'm not a scientist. I can't say.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): because those were your words.

TOM SWAN: I am saying --

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Those were your words.

TOM SWAN: No. Let me rephrase exactly what I said.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Rephrase. Okay.

TOM SWAN: I said that scientists across the board say that we have a much higher likelihood of pandemics and superbugs as a result of climate change.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Okay.

TOM SWAN: Whether or not it's this time or whether or not it's a tornado in Tennessee, or whether or not it's a hurricane in Puerto Rico, the fact that our failure to act will increase the likelihood of these types of events happening means that every time one of them happens it -- those of us that propose in action are contributing to those whether or not there's a direct cause -- cause in relationship.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): The only reason why I brought that up is because in your testimony you said that, you know, you mentioned specifically the coronavirus and linked it to global warming, so I just wanted to make sure --

TOM SWAN: No. I brought up pandemics --

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): You were on record saying that.

TOM SWAN: I brought up pandemics.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Okay. And, my second --

TOM SWAN: And, I said the current events could be.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): My second question to you was in regards to a comment that I had made earlier in regards to the Green New Deal in Washington D.C. A -- a proposal that I certainly don't support mainly because of its cost, and again, I still haven't gotten an answer today as to how much this

Connecticut Green New Deal would cost the State of Connecticut because in a time that we're in -- as I mentioned before, and again, some of the goals I'm sure are allottable, but in the times that we're in, we still don't know whether or not a state trooper will have to take home an electric car and then we, the taxpayers of Connecticut, would be ultimately in charge of setting up a charging station at his or her home or whether or not the state workforce -- meaning you know any -- any type of truck on the road, any type of dump truck, any type of state vehicle would be converted over to electric, so my concern again when I see the title Green New Deal is the cost, and taking it to a United States/National -- National approach, when I hear folks talking about the "Green New Deal" we all hope in the spirit of, you know, being truthful to the American people that we're gonna practice what we preach, so when someone gets behind a proposal that states that we're gonna eliminate airplanes, then --

TOM SWAN: Who -- who is -- who anywhere has said that? Seriously.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): Well, if you look --

TOM SWAN: You can't just make things up.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): At the federal proposal --

TOM SWAN: Nobody said to replace airplanes.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): If you look at the federal proposal, there is a provision in there that would change and alter the way we travel by air.

TOM SWAN: But, that has nothing to do with airplanes.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): You must not have read the federal proposal.

TOM SWAN: Okay. I -- I --

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I appreciate that you guys are having a heated discourse.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): No. No. That's not --

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I think it's appropriate.

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): I digress.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I'd just like to ask that you each let the other one --

TOM SWAN: Sure. I'm finishing.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Finish their comment before --

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): This is my final comment.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Okay. And -- and if you want to respond, that's --

REP. POLLETTA (68TH): My final comment is just that I hope that politicians across the state of Connecticut and the country, especially those perhaps seeking higher office, would then practice what they preach. I've read the proposal. I've spent some time looking at it, and I have major issues with any politician telling me that they want to eliminate something, but then they turn around and use. That's the only reason why I made that statement before. I understand, I respect your opinion. When I hear someone calling to eliminate airplanes as they are and then taking a private jet whether they're running for president or not, I take issue with that. That's my issue. Thank you.

TOM SWAN: Okay. A couple of things, and I'll not be heated. Changing the way and increasing the efficiency of airplanes is common sense and UTC is very proud of how they're evolving and the advances they're making in terms of developing greener airplanes, and I think the entire state of Connecticut applauds them for moving forward and encourages it. Nobody's called for doing away with airplanes, and I want the record to reflect on that. in terms of plugins and everything that goes on, I recently also purchased an electric car. I did not have a plug outside my house. It cost me less than \$100 dollars to put -- put a plug into my house. As others have said, the amount of money that will save in terms of gasoline and in terms of maintenance of cars will more than pay for anything. One of the things that's particularly also good about this bill is this bill calls for reports back to the legislature and studies by DEEP on the cost of both action but inaction. It doesn't have the exact road maps as -- I think it was one of the earlier speakers. I'm thinking it doesn't say that you have to do electrification. It doesn't say that it's not about fuels. There's not an exact road map because as I have mentioned and others have, the technology is advancing so quickly and also the cost of fossil fuels is going to be going up through the roof whether the people that made up this stuff earlier today want to admit it or not. The time that fossil fuels are going to be a viable economic alternative in this country is short term. I don't know if folks have seen in the last three months -- three of the major banks have been underwriting oil exploration in the Arctic and in Alaska. They've said they're no longer gonna lend on it. The Hartford -- the insurance company here based in

Connecticut is no longer underwriting a certain type of coal or tar sands development. That includes both investments and underwriting, and there's whole pressure on the industry in ways that are happening outside of legislative sessions that harken me back to where I got some of my -- cut my teeth in activism and that's the (inaudible 05:17:03) Movement, and the pressure that's gonna be coming on insurance companies and banks over the next couple of years, we're gonna see some real radical changes in the way that they approach the fossil fuel industry, and this bill helps Connecticut to anticipate that, to develop the workforce for the future that can really be a leader in terms of how we address both climate change, make livable wages for families, but also how we deal with the issues of equity, and make sure that everybody's included unlike how many of our policies have been in the past. I really applaud you for bringing up this bill. This is the right committee to bring up this bill, and the rest of the legislature will learn that as we go forward.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Thank you. Other comments or questions? Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): So, how do you envision this transition occurring. Do you see massive dislocation, workers resisting, what do you see?

TOM SWAN: I'm not positive we're gonna see massive dislocation in Connecticut because we don't have many of the extraction industries, and I think -- but there already is existing, right. I mean why are frontline building trade workers lined up against environmentalist around whether or not to build a gas plant that we're not gonna need in ten

years. Why is there that fight? Why are we saying -- seriously? How are we not -- this bill says what are we going to do to build a type of energy future that we need that gives high-paying, good-paying jobs to folks. Why aren't we retrofitting every single one of the state office buildings in the State of Connecticut -- every single municipal school building, local districts, helping the nonprofits that contract with the state to begin the transition to this? Why does anybody in a public housing complex have an electricity bill that's threatened to shutoff where we could put up shared solar and solar panels in a way that we wouldn't have to be providing energy assistance? We haven't tackled this problem in a comprehensive way that's about a different paradigm, instead of saying what do the corporate interests want within this specific piece of -- of industry sector versus how are we going to build a green economy that brings everybody up, and I do think that the amount of retrofitting that needs to go on, the upgrades to some of our electrical grids to conserve energy, the development of more microgrids that's decentralized, are all job-creating ways that we need to be forward looking in terms of figuring that out and figuring out how we do it in a more equitable manner than what we've done in the past. Everybody pays for the conservation and the renewable programs. It's wrong that they are significant communities in the states that are locked out from benefitting those -- from those.

REP. WINKLER (56TH): Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): I think that's it for comments and questions. Thank you for your testimony.

TOM SWAN: Thank you.

SENATOR KUSHNER (24TH): Next up, we have Susan Eastwood from the Sierra Club.

SUSAN EASTWOOD: Good afternoon, Chairman Kushner, Chairman Porter, and members of the Labor Committee. Is that good? Yeah. I'm Susan Eastwood, and what he said basically, but I wanted to add to that. I know you've heard a lot today about 354. I wanted to address that one and also 5385 briefly.

So, I'm a resident of Ashford, and I founded the Ashford Clean Energy Task Force in 2009, so I'm going to focus on my own personal experience so maybe that can add a little personal stories to what you've heard -- all the facts you've heard today. I'm also a leader in the Connecticut Energy Network, which is a group of over 60 task forces and towns around the state, and I have recently become an ExCom member of Sierra Club, as you said. So, I'm obviously testifying in support of SB 354, and I believe that it will set -- it's really key to set targets to reach 100 percent reduction in greenhouse gases through clean and renewable energy through transportation and buildings as well, which hasn't been dealt with so much in the past. It also will create good green jobs and prepare a workforce for them, which is your focus here, of course, address environmental injustice concerns and hold the state accountable.

So, in my experience working in clean energy for the last ten years or so, I've seen the legislature do some really great things to support clean energy and energy efficiency in the state, and I've also worked on regional and national issues in this area, but I would like to say that the legislature hasn't always

been so supportive, as you probably know. There have been times when they cut -- you know raided the energy efficiency and Green Bank funds, for example, in order to help to you know balance the budget. I understand, but -- but obviously, that was something that sort of stopped or delayed the progress that we're talking about here that is so urgently needed to basically save our planet [laughing], so.

I believe that this inconsistency could be addressed with a bill like this. I know it's very comprehensive and there's a lot -- a lot of committees that will have to look at it, but I think it's really urgent that we try to pass this accountability and support for green jobs going forward because when we cut those funds in the past, those green jobs went away in Connecticut. Those solar companies left the state, and that hurt our economy. It could have been growing all this time. When we cut the Green Bank Fund, we lost a billion dollars in investments that could have been helping our economy and creating more jobs, so I think that's kind of my point that I wanted to add was that we need to be consistent and make sure we have accountability to meeting our goals in the future.

And, if you just indulge me a little bit more. As a member of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, I wanted to support the Equal Pay Bill today. I didn't really prepare long testimony on it, but I didn't see a lot of other people coming and talking about it, so Senator Porter, I really appreciate all your work on that issue, also Senator Kushner -- Representative Porter. Sorry. But, I just wanted to, you know, second the things that we talked about at the press conference today and support that bill

and some of the other bills in that area as well.  
Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for your testimony.  
Can you tell me why that bill is so important to you  
-- the 5385, specifically? Have you had any  
personal impact around it? Do you have a story  
around someone that you know' s been impacted?

SUSAN EASTWOOD: Well, I've heard many, many stories  
[laughing] over the years. I worked in domestic  
violence for a long time, and it was so hard to see  
women trying to get started again based on their,  
you know, having to start over based on their  
histories and so forth, but you know, we did deal  
with that yesterday -- sorry -- last year, but the -  
- I think the comparable pay, comparable jobs issue  
that you spoke about this morning is -- is really  
key to making that really work, and making women  
finally have equal pay. I've actually been working  
quite a lot this last couple of years to try to pass  
the equal rights amendment for women, which would  
support equal pay, give it a constitutional backbone  
for equal pay in this country, so hopefully, we can  
get that through as well.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you, and I do agree with  
that because things have definitely changes and what  
equal was suffice for back in the day when women  
first entered the labor force was okay. This --  
this really did address that, but because we have  
advanced not only with women in the workforce but  
also the jobs that women and men are doing  
comparable, those have a really significant and  
critical position in this, and I think -- and using  
that as opposed to equal, it will help us to level

the playing field and bring equity to wages for women -- all women.

SUSAN EASTWOOD: I'll try to change my language on that too. [Laughing].

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you. Any comments or questions? I'm seeing none. I'd just like to thank you for your time and your testimony today.

SUSAN EASTWOOD: Thank you all.

REP. PORTER (94TH): You're welcome. You have a good day. All right. We're working our way through this list, and we are almost done. Next up, we have Stosh Milward. [Background conversing]. Yes, sir. You -- you are up to testify. [Background conversing]. Okay. [Background conversing]. Okay. So, you don't want to testify in front of the committee? Okay. [Background conversing]. All right. Well, thank you for being here today, sir. You're welcome. Okay. The last person that we have listed today to testify will be Michael Riley testifying on Senate Bill 351, AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR AND TECHNICAL CHANGES TO WORKER'S COMPENSATION ACT. You have the floor, sir.

MICHAEL RILEY: Thank you, Madam Chairman and members of the committee. I'm Mike Riley from Thomaston, Connecticut. I am the Chairman of the Worker's Comp Advisory Board, which is created in statutes adopted in the 1990s to advise the Chairman of the Worker's Comp Commission and to also make recommendations to the legislature and the governor on the reappointment of Worker's Comp commissioners. The bill, 351, is technical minor adjustments to the Worker's Comp statute.

Section 2 does something that's important to the commission, and that is that it eliminates a requirement that the commission meet twice in each quarter, and it changes that to a requirement that they meet once in each quarter. As it turned out that there's no need for this commission to meet that frequently. It's a good -- it's a good idea. This bill was in last year. It should be a consent calendar item, and any committee that it goes through and through the both houses. However, it got caught in the log jam at the end of the session, and I'm here to first thank you for staying, and I'll let you out of here very quickly. Please get this high on your agenda, move it to I think Judiciary will probably have to deal with it, and -- and let's move it through the houses so that we don't get caught again. This is technical in nature, and -- and not a big deal, but let's not lose it again. Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): Thank you for your testimony. Any comments or questions? I'm seeing none. Thank you again, and you have a great day.

MICHAEL RILEY: Thank you.

REP. PORTER (94TH): All right. Well, that concludes the list that I have before me. If there's anyone else in the room that has not been listed and would like to testify, please make yourself known now. [Background conversing]. Okay. Well, I think that will conclude today's Labor and Public Employees' Public Hearing, and I thank you all for being here.