



TESTIMONY OF
WINSTON HEIMER, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS
BEFORE THE FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MARCH 15, 2021

IN SUPPORT OF HB 6187 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESTRUCTURING OF CERTAIN TAXES AND EQUITY
IN SUPPORT OF SB 821 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REFORMATION OF CERTAIN TAXES AND TAX EQUITY

Senator Fonfara, Senator Martin, Representative Scanlon, Representative Cheeseman and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present this testimony. My name is Winston Heimer. I am a resident of West Hartford and the Executive Vice President of the Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans.

I write on behalf of the 50,000 members of the CT Alliance for Retired Americans which is a member of the Recovery for All Coalition. We are testifying in strong support of HB 6187 and SB 821.

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” More than 150 years ago, Charles Dickens penned those words in his historical novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, which dealt with the 18th century French Revolution. One of the leading causes of that revolution was the gross income inequality that existed in France in those days.

It seems we haven't come too far in the past 250 years.

As has been recently written: The impact of this recession has fallen on working families the hardest. The coronavirus pandemic has had widely different impacts depending on where you work, on what you do for a living. Service and hospitality workers, frontline jobs, have seen their hours reduced or disappear altogether, or have been forced to work through a health emergency with no hazard pay. Professionals, those at the top at the economic ladder, have done fine. Millionaires, billionaires, those at the top of the investor class, meanwhile, have seen their wealth climb even higher.

Connecticut, one of the most unequal states in the nation, has followed this trend. Working families, especially families of color, have seen their incomes plummet, while the wealthy few grew even wealthier while paying lower taxes than anyone else.

We need to fully fund long-term care, including affordable health care for caregivers, to ensure quality services and uplift home care workers, group home workers and nursing home workers out of poverty. We need to expand staffing at the Department of Public Health to be prepared for the next public health crisis.

And in a year when so many have sacrificed so much to protect their families, to protect their communities, and to save lives, Connecticut needs a state budget that asks more from those at the top. We need a people's recovery that makes working families its first priority. We need a state budget that has jobs, healthcare, food insecurity, economic opportunity, and inequality as its main focus.

We urge you to support HB 6187 and SB 821. Thank you for this opportunity to place our testimony on record.