Aging Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-56

Title: AN ACT DETERRING AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS.

Vote Date: 2/16/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/9/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill is intended to remove all references of dates on job applications which would lead a potential employer to discern a job applicant's age. Currently employment applications often require information (such as birth date or graduation dates) that reveal an applicant's age and thus potential age discrimination occurring, which by statute is prohibited. The removal of this information would lead to senior citizens having the same opportunities in obtaining gainful employment as all other citizens in the State.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz: She testified in support of this legislation as Chair of the Governor's Council on Women and Girls and stated that women are more likely then men to face this kind of discrimination. She indicated that the Governor's Council on Women and Girls is willing to work with the Aging Committee to secure its passage.

Commissioner Amy Porter, Dept. of Aging and Disability Services: She spoke in favor of passage of this bill pointing out that they have programs seeking employment for persons with disabilities and these programs don't have any upper age limits.

Mairead Painter, Long Term Care Ombudsman: She offered testimony in support of this bill stating that they have residents in a long-term care setting who would relish the opportunity to be employed. They do not want to be judged on their age or a disability they may have experienced.

Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities: Submitted testimony in support of the bill. They point out that it is illegal under current state law to discriminate based on age but that employers still ask applicants for information concerning their date of birth or graduation dates and that this kind of information can be used to discriminate.

Michael Werner, The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity: They submitted testimony in support of this legislation. They point out that Connecticut is the 6th oldest state in the nation and that by 2022, 35% of the workforce with be over 50. They have worked with the Governor's Council on Women and Girls after its creation in 2019 and stand in support of them on this issue.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Marie Allen, Executive Director, Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging: They are advocates for elder justice and they support this bill since age discrimination is becoming a significant threat to the financial health and well-beng of a large sector of the labor market.

Laila Mandour, Chair, AFT Connecticut Retiree Division: They submitted comments in support of this proposal pointing out that age is not a reliable indicator of a potential employee's ability to work and undertake the duties of a particular job.

Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut: They testified in favor of this proposal and point out that ageism is the stereotyping of and discrimination against persons or groups on the basis of their age.

Michael Daley, Intern of the North Central Area Agency on Aging: He offered testimony in support of this bill. Age discrimination in employment applications is a very real and common occurrence that effects our aging population and it is illegal. Also due to the current pandemic there is an added sense of urgency to pass this bill. According to AARP surveys age discrimination was experienced by 61% of people age 45 and older and 44% of the respondents were asked age-related questions on their applications or during an interview. It also suggested that job loss later in life is associated with negative effects on physical and mental health. It also states that Connecticut ranks 2nd in the country for the prevalence of age bias.

Tia Murphy, AARP CT Volunteer State President: She submitted her testimony in favor of this proposal. She went on to describe her own circumstance and related the disappointments she experienced. She had an MBA from Loyola University and 35 years' experience managing multimillion-dollar budgets and overseeing hundreds of staff and earning a 6-figure salary. She ultimately ended up with minimum wage jobs that she was able to work at until she could retire.

Nora Duncan, AARP State Director: She offered testimony in support of this proposal and points out that the concept has been raised by the Aging Committee in 2017, 2018, 2019 and again in 2020. She hopes that this year it will pass the legislature and be made law.

Stephen Wanczyk-Karp, Exec. Director, National Assoc. of Social Workers/Ct. Chapter: Their testimony was in support of this bill. They believe that this legislation will have a positive

effect on making Connecticut a state where workers of all ages choose to remain. This is important since Connecticut has the sixth highest percentage of residents 60 years or older. Being an age friendly workforce state is to the benefit of our entire everyone.

Madeline Granato, Policy Director, Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund: They submitted comments in support of this legislation. They point out that older women of color are more likely to experience poverty that their male counter parts. Despite programs in place nearly two thirds of the older population in poverty are women. While the poverty rate for white women is 12.8%, the rate for older Native American women is 23.4%, for older black women is 25.2% and for older Hispanic women is 26.1%.

Kelly McConney Moore, Intern, ACLU Connecticut: They offered testimony in favor of this proposal. They point out that 6 in 10 workers over age 45 say they have seen or experienced age discrimination. Seventy six percent of older Black workers saying that have experienced age discrimination with women reporting it with more frequency.

Rob Baril, President, SEIU, District 1199: They are supportive of this bill because it will help to ensure that workers across the State are protected and valued in their workplaces.

Council 4, AFSCME: They submitted comments indicating support for this proposal.

Dianne Yamin and Marie Miszewski, Co-Chairs, Age Well Community Council of Danbury: their testimony is in support of this bill. Some of the information outlined in their comments is that by 2022 35% of the total work force will be 50 or older. The two fastest age groups in the US Labor pool are those over age 75 and those age 65 -74. An AARP survey showed that 61% of people 45 or older have seen or experienced age discrimination and that 44% of respondents who interviewed for a job were asked age related questions.

William Marut, AARP Volunteer: Mr. Marut offer testimony in support of this proposal. He believes that the employment application has a number of "knock out" functions that narrow down the number of candidates to be considered and that "quantitative data, such as date of birth, age, and dates of school attendance and graduation are some of those factors. He believes that in fact that this kind of filtering is often done by computer and that many candidates never get beyond the evaluation process.

Stacy Stubbleford, AARP Volunteer: She offered testimony in support of this proposal. She related her own experience with in a phone job interview when the interviewer asked when she had graduated high school and when she told them the call was disconnected. She feels that a person's experience, capabilities and accomplishments should be the only factor considered.

Rochelle Gimenez, PHD, Willimantic: She offered testimony in support of this bill. She suggests that if she had to include her age when applying for a job rather than the graduation dates, she would probably not have gotten it.

Carol Williams, PHD, Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut: Her comments are in support of this bill. She suggests that a Wall Street Journal article recently ranked Connecticut #2 in implicit age discrimination. Also, she offered a number of study's whose results indicated age related discrimination in a number of different areas.

Kipple Martin, e-mail testimony: she offered testimony in support of this legislation and wrote about her personal experience with age discrimination.

Judy Allen, West Hartford, e-mail testimony: She is in favor of this bill.

Roger Regnier, e-mail testimony: Mr**.** Regnier is in favor of this bill. He indicated he has experienced potential age discrimination 3 times in the past.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

No Opposition to this bill offered

Reported by: Joe Perkus, Clerk   Date: 3/2/21
**   Richard Ferrari, Assistant Clerk**
**   Richard O'Neil, Assistant Clerk**