

**Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 11, 2021 Public Hearing**

Testimony in Support of S.B. 1002 AN ACT CONCERNING LABOR ISSUES RELATED TO COVID-19, PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND OTHER STAFFING MATTERS

Testimony in Support of H.B. 6595 AN ACT CONCERNING LABOR MATTERS RELATED TO COVID-19, PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND OTHER STAFFING MATTERS

Senator Julie Kushner, Representative Robyn Porter, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, my name is **Paola Fonseca** I am a resident of **Rocky Hill** and a member of **CEUI**. I work at **The Department of Veterans Affairs** and I am a **Dining Room Supervisor**.

I am submitting testimony in support of S.B. 1002 An Act Concerning Labor Issues Related to COVID-19, Personal Protective Equipment and Other Staffing Matters and H.B. 6595 An Act Concerning Labor Matters Related to COVID-19, Personal Protective Equipment and Other Staffing Matters. I would specifically like to focus on Sections 12 – 14 of both bills.

Let me begin by saying that from the start of the Pandemic, my job as the dining room supervisor required face to face, close proximity with other staff, veteran workers and the residents we serve. Our dining hall never closed during this time. For the first few months we had no Plexiglass to help as protection. I cleaned the contaminated dining room after each meal and I also delivered food to residents who were on Covid positive. This was terrifying as I have asthma, and high blood pressure. I have an elderly mom who's very sick and being her primary care giver I lived in constant fear that I would contract the virus and bring home to her. I would literally remove all of my clothing at the door before entering my home or my mom's home Testing was not available for months, so every day you came to work wondering if you were next. It's very hard to put into words the fear and anxiety that you have when the rest of the world is being told to stay home, stay safe, shelter, do not go out but you're driving to work on a lonely road without another single car on the road. I am a 23 year employee at the DVA and I have never lived through something this scary. I have never felt so unsafe or that my life and the lives of the ones I love were in jeopardy just because I was coming to work to support my family and care for that veterans we serve.

I urge the committee to support both S.B. 1002 and H.B. 6595.

Thank you.
Paola Fonseca
860-335-9399
paola.fonseca@ct.gov

