

# Labor and Public Employees Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-212  
AN ACT CONCERNING PERMANENT PARTIAL DISABILITY BENEFITS AND  
**Title:** PENSION OFFSETS.  
**Vote Date:** 3/10/2022  
**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute  
**PH Date:** 3/3/2022  
**File No.:** 74

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Rep. Michael D Quinn, 82nd Dist.,  
Rep. Michael A. Winkler, 56th Dist.

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill prohibits municipals or special taxing district pension systems from diminishing or eliminating certain retirement rights and benefits.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None stated.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association, Chair, Meghan Lyon; supports this bill stating that retired employees receiving a pension or retirement benefit from their municipalities or special taxing district should continue to be paid without an offset or impact to their pensions. It is stated that workers' compensation benefits are entirely separate from any other pension and retirement benefits earned by the employee and one should not impact the other.

SEIU, Organizer, Stacey Zimmerman; supports this bill.

Uniformed Professional Fire Fighters Association of Connecticut, Director, Jeff Tomchik; supports this bill stating that even with significant advances in occupational safety standards, there still exists inherent risks that may lead to worker injuries. It is stated that the issue

becomes evident when an employee is injured so severely, they are unable to reach maximum medical recovery and as a result, employees are compelled to retire with a disability pension. It is stated that when this pension is offset by the corresponding permanent partial disability payment warranted through and defined by workers' compensation, an act of garnishing the pension is created and construed as punitive.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

Connecticut Council of Small Towns, Executive Director, Betsy Gara; opposes this bill stating that this bill is an unfunded mandate that will result in costs to the 140 municipalities that offer defined benefit plans. It is stated that this bill would also create a mechanism that would enable a claim to continue indefinitely until a settlement is reached, which is likely to increase costs for municipal employers. There is concern that some provisions in the bill which would invalidate collective bargaining agreements between municipal employees and employers if the claimant is unhappy with the settlement.

Town of Guilford, Director of Human Resources, Mitchell R. Goldblatt; opposes this bill stating that this bill will hasten the demise of pensions in municipal government by putting even more stress on local finances. It is stated that while municipal pensions can indeed be high for those who earn them, it is hard to explain and justify the instances when someone earns more in retirement than they do as an employee. There are concerns that this bill implies that they are incapable of communicating effectively and imposes unnecessary, and unfunded burdens on Connecticut's towns and cities.

Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, Senior Legislative Associate, Zachary McKeown; opposes this bill stating that the costs associated with this proposal are incalculable and unpredictable. There are concerns that this would create a system where claimants receive greater compensation while they are out of work than when they were employed. It is also stated that this bill would establish a precedent that would enable future legislative action to invalidate components of collective bargaining agreements if any stake holder is unhappy with the agreed upon result.

**Reported by:** Alex Koshgarian, Assistant Clerk

**Date:** 3/22/2022