

HB 8228

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Public Personnel & Military Affairs 141, 144-147

House

5066

Senate

3401

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**PUBLIC  
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AND  
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Mr, Bitzer,

I am speaking for the Retirement Commission today. You remember 7955. AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTION OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS BY NEW STATE EMPLOYEES. This would provide that employees who had not made an election by any one of the plans in the Retirement System could automatically be in part B and therefore would not go by a six month period and be precluded from ever being a member of the State Employees Retirement Plan. The present situation is hard and this would help to make it more palatable. 7956, this substitutes the word spouse for widow in the plan covering policemen and firemen survivors benefits. There are a couple of police women already covered. It's in line with what is being done in private pensions and has an anti-discrimination laws and we recommend its passage. 7959 is merely a clarification bill there has been some confusion whether we cover disability after employees leave State service and of course the fact is we do not, so we put the words while in State service here for clarification purposes. 7961 provides the teachers who have not made any election will automatically after one month be in the State Employees Retirement Fund, otherwise, as it works now, I think they would be covered for Social Security only, which gives them an opportunity to pick one of the State plans if they fail to join the Teacher's Plan. All four of those bills the Retirement Commission recommends. There is a bill 8228 which has to do with the Medical Board. It provides for increasing the numbers the medical board working with us. We are highly in favor of this bill, they do a fine job, a thorough job and their work load has increased, the number of state employees has increased, they are going to speak for themselves in sympathy with their bill. All these things are pretty good so far but now I come to 8511 where I have been empowered to say a few words on the contrary side of that bill. That kind of coverage, death benefit to the widows and survivors was very difficult to obtain. The State did not want to take the risk, we got an insurance company to do it. The insurance company has a contract that starts on July 1, and ends on June 30th. They set a rate at the beginning of the year we had to know who is in the plan at the beginning of the year. If groups to come in during the year, particularly a large group, it might throw the cost off, they might not be willing to take it at that cost, and there are practical administrative considerations and first we'd have to get the insurance underwriter to agree and it complicates the administration, what we are doing. Thank you.

Rep. Motto,

Are there any questions? Thank you, Mr. Bitzer. Dr. Moore, then Aaron Gersten.

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Rep. Motto, The next speaker will be Ruth Ericson, followed by-----  
Go ahead Mrs Ericson.

Mrs. Ericson, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am Ruth Ericson from Wethersfield speaking in favor of HB8191. AN ACT CONCERNING PRORATING OF VETERAN'S EXEMPTIONS. In our present system there is no way for us, for disabled veteran's to sell his home without losing exemptions for a year. He gets it back after a year but sometimes it is used as a bargaining agent. I don't feel that it should be. I feel that the purpose of the original exemption was to reward disabled veterans for his loss of earning power and that no one else should get it and I urge you to support this bill.

Rep. Motto, Thank you. The next name is a Dr. John Bannon.

Dr. Bachman, I'm Dr. John Bachman, Chairman of the Medical Examining Board of the State Retirement Commission and I'd like to speak briefly to HB-8228 AN ACT CONCERNING DISABILITY RETIREMENT, INCREASING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD. The Medical Examining Board has operated for many years under the present law which permits the appointment of only three State physicians to the Board. As all of us are full time State employees, and it so happens thr three members of this Board who have been on for many years all have very responsible positions in the State service in addition we find it very difficult very often to obtain a simple majority present at the Board meeting. If the Governor were authorized to appoint additional physicians we would then have the number for a simple majority. The work load of this Board has increased tremendously to the point where today it is necessary for us to meet very early in the morning and carry on our meetings until nearly 5 o'clock in the afternoon and on several occasions we have had to delay consideration of applicants because we just could not get on the list for the month which they applied. If we could get the additional physicians actually we'll set up two boards at the same time and therefore much more reasonably and expeditiously consider these cases. One other point is that we would not be accused of not giving sufficient consideration to a case. We would be able to give additional time to individual cases, perhaps with the result of greater justice to the individual and to the State we are representing. The additional points in this bill merely add to things that are already being done but do not have legal status. Do you have any questions.

Sen. Burke, What number is needed for a quorum? Seven.

Dr. Bachman Three would be a quorum to consider any one case.

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Rep. Motto, Thank you Doctor. Damon Shingleton followed by John Bannon and Howard Reynolds.

Mr. Shingleton, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, Damon Shingleton I'm the Director of the Conn. State Employees Council 16. I just want to speak briefly on a couple of bills that you have before you today. I would say that we completely agree with Dr. Bachman's testimony . There is a great need for additional help in the Medical Retirement Board. Many individuals who are handicapped must wait for long periods of time because the Board is so over worked and certainly HB-8228 is a very good bill and we would hope the Committee gives it favorable consideration. On HB-7959 basically it is the intent of the bill to clarify the intent of Retirement and not the change of the option after retirement . We would support the bill but we could see how the bill as written could create problems. We question whether an individual who has a handicap when he comes into State service whether or not he would be eligible to get his retirement under this section and if he did come down with a condition which would worsen the handicap which he already had when hired by the State. We support HB-7955 we feel it has a void in retirement law that individuals who come into State service don't really know what option they should take. Many cases wind up with only a portion of the retirement and certainly this would be a move in the right direction. Thank you very much.

Rep. Motto, Any questions? Thank you Damon. John Bannon.

Mr. Bannon, Gentlemen, and members of the Committee, my name is John Bannon President of the Conn. State Federation of Teachers. AFL-CIO. We would like to oppose HB-8510. We feel that this bill would cause another crisis for the Teacher's Retirement System by another delay of funds and will not keep faith with those who have paid into the system for many years. What is actually going to take place we are afraid is that with the deficit that is facing our State financial theme for people in the legislature and in other places to look for sources of funds. We would hope that after the bonding procedure which was instigated in 1969, we would hope that any further raise on the Teacher Retirement Fund would cease. If this continues to go on in any form what will eventually happen is we will be in the exact same position the State Employees' Retirement Fund is in and eventually we will just be creating more problems for the State of Connecticut and eventually we will have another bankrupt situation facing the teachers of the State and these teachers who have been paying in for many years will not appreciate the fact that their money would be going down the drain . So what we are asking you is this Committee report unfavorable HB-8510 as another way of assisting another situation that would cause untold harm to the Teacher's Retirement System. The teachers would like

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to go on record in support of HB-7446. We had a situation and we were kind of the middlemen. We were not the bargaining agent there but our Local was involved directly in the situation and what actually took place was something we think Rep. Badalato's bill can correct and that is that once a contract has been negotiated in good faith that this contract be accepted as a contract in existence to the employees and the employee board in the city in whatever instance they try to negotiate.

Rep. Motto,

Mr. Bannon, this bill by some mistake was transferred back to us from Education. That's where it is right now. Either that or it is in Labor now. We hope it is not having a difficult time if it is in Labor.

Mr. Bannon,

We want to check on that one and follow it through. Thank you very much Rep. Motto. We also would like to support the idea of Rep. Stevens Hb-7621. We ourselves have asked Rep. Prete to submit HB-7024 which we feel which is good for Retirement Funds. At the present time the teachers who are supplying many dollars for the Retirement Fund have nothing to say about the investment of those funds and we would like that representation for the teachers in the State. We would also like to support some of the bills before your Committee on behalf of fellow workers here in the State of Connecticut. HB-8233 dealing with lung disease and dealing with the Unemployment Compensation aspects of lung disease, we would like to go on record in favor of that bill. We are in close contact with many firemen and we recognize that that situation exists and many of these people are in need of help. We also would like to support HR-7819 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF POLICEMEN AND FIREMEN. We also would like to support H R-8229. This I might add does effect our members. We have a situation here where I was involved directly where we actually tried to initiate some help for a teacher in one of our schoolshere in the State of Connecticut. We tried to move the man from the situation he was in in order to relieve him. Actually as a result of what we did nothing happened. Shortly after the man involved had a mental breakdown and the situation was unfortunate in that it could have been taken care of if we had better coverage so we would like to go on record in support of 8229. Thank you very much.

Rep. Motto,

Thank you, Mr. Bannon. Sal Perruccio.

Mr. Perruccio,

My name is Sal Perruccio Pressident of State Employees Union Independent. I would like to speak in favor of bill 7955 and that is the option for State employees after six months to be allowed to take their pension. What happened now the employee is anxious to get a job and when interviewed the employer asks them various questions and it is easy to say that they want this coverage but when it comes to a pension it becomes complicated.

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They have three different plans to pick from. For an example, I will keep it brief. I had a little girl from Italy and she was not familiar with the Language and she applied for a job and she was happy to be working in our hospital and she did not care much about the Pension Plan but she got around talking about the money she was saving and her fellow worker and the Pension Plan, she felt pretty bad and I transferred it for her in the Pension Plan and I did what I could for her and the way we got around it was she had to resign her job one day and then be rehired the next day so she came into the Pension Plan. That's exactly what happened. So they should have this opportunity to come into the Pension Plan, it's their money and it's a saving in case they quit. I think as long as State employees have an option that they should have at least six months to come back and say I want to choose plan A, B, or C. On bill 8228, INCREASING THE MEDICAL BOARD. I am in favor this bill and particularly for the reasons Dr. Bachman outlined. If you increase the Board from three to seven, even if they are State employees, Dr. Marsh is a fine person works out of the Department of Mental Health. Dr. Bachman is the supervisor at Cedarcrest. I think there should be no question that it should be increased. Thank you, very much.

Rep. Motto, Thank you. Thomas Skirm.

Mr. Skirm, I am Thomas H. Skirm of Wethersfield one of the three elected representatives to the State Teachers Retirement Board. You've heard from the more attractive member already. She is an active teacher, I am presently retired. I am speaking and asking you to report unfavorable action on HB-8510. My concern for this is that those people who are now retired are going to sense any change in the provisions of providing funds for their pensions. It is going to be upsetting for them for the simple reason that many of them are solely dependent on these funds to live. I hope that you will take this action on this particular bill. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Rep. Motto, Thank you. Frank Burns.

Mr. Burns, Frank Burns of Hartford, Legislative Chairman for Conn. State Fireman's Association. I know you must have heard a lot of testimony on various bills. I will just register in favor of HB-7819 CONCERNING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF DECEASED FIREMEN AND POLICEMEN KILLED IN THE COURSE OF DUTY. HB-7956-AN ACT MAKING POLICEMEN AND FIREMEN SURVIVORS BENEFITS APPLICABLE TO EITHER SPOUSE. HB-8040 and that concerns the Legislative Committee to study the feasibility of providing a guaranteed income to widows and children of policemen and firemen killed in the line of duty. HB-8243 an ACT PROVIDING FOR DISEASE OF THE LUNG AND RESPIRATORY

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Page 16, calendar 1169, house Bill 7903, file 1284.

Calendar 1170, substitute for House Bill 7959, file 1292.

Calendar 1171, substitute for House Bill 8228, file 1294.

Page 17, Calendar 1217, substitute for House Bill 7686,  
file 1349.

Page 18, Calendar 1234, House Bill 6837, file 1353.

Calendar 1242, substitute for House Bill 6448, file 1377.

Calendar 1245, Substitute for House Bill 7974, file 1382.

Page 19, Calendar 1263, substitute for House Bill 5561,  
file 1431.

Calendar 1273, substitute for House Bill 5247, file 1429.

Calendar 1274, substitute for House Bill 6512, file 1428.

Page 20, Calendar 1299, House Bill 5147, file 1437.

Page 21, Calendar 1308, substitute for House Bill 5895,  
file 1463.

Calendar 1311, substitute for House Bill 5953, file 1445.

Calendar 1312, substitute for House Bill 6123, file 1468.

Calendar 1316, substitute for House Bill 6292, file 1456.

Page 22, Calendar 1322, substitute for House Bill 6447,  
file 1497.

Calendar 1324, House Bill 6525, file 1475.

Page 24, Calendar 1379, substitute for House Bill 9229,  
file 1576.

Page 25, Calendar 1383, substitute for House Bill 7744,  
file 1573.

Page 28, Calendar 1422, substitute for Senate Bill 240,

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## THE SENATE AT 10:35 P.M., RECESSED

## AFTER RECESS

The Senate was called to order at 10:58 P.M., Senator DeNardis in the Chair.

## THE CHAIR:

If I may make this announcement, Senator Caldwell is about to list a long number of bills, by number. And it is extremely important that we have quiet in the Chamber, so there is no confusion as to the bills that he will list. I ask your cooperation.

## SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, I have a list of bills by numbers, to read. I move that we accept the joint committees favorable reports and acceptance of the bills, as follows: Cal. No. 1326, House Bill 7455, File 1256; File No. 1327, House Bill 7686, File 1349; Cal 1328, House Bill 7710, File 820; Cal 1329, House Bill 7744, File 1573, Cal. 1331, House Bill 7903, File 1284; C l. 1332, House Bill 7959, File 1292; Cal 1333, House Bill 7974, File 1382; Cal 1334, House Bill 8033, File 931; Cal 1335, House Bill 8182, File 979; C<sup>a</sup>l. 1336, House Bill 8228, File 1294; Cal. 1337, House Bill 8284, File 899; C l 1338, House Bill 8683, File 591; CAL. 1340, House Bill 8931 File 123; CAL. 1341, House Bill 8936, File 832; Cal. 1342, House Bill 8967, File 1072; Cal. 1343, House Bill 9025, File 953; Cal. 1345, House Bill 9229, File 1576; Cal. 1346, House Bill 9231, File 1451; CAL. 1347, House Bill 9327; File 704; Cal. 1348, House Bill 9251, File 1574, Cal. 1349, Senate Bill 825; C<sub>2</sub>l. 259, Senate Bill 989, File 291; Cal. 695, Senate Bill 1700, File 990; C l. 732, Senate Bill 458, File 1052; CAL. 139, House Bill 7447, File 104; CAL. 166, House Bill 6409, File 136; Cal. 1363, House Bill 9194, File 1634; C<sup>a</sup>l. 1364, House Bill 5231