PA10-169

HB5202

House	1055-1063	9
Labor	350-352, 388, 524-527, 796-803, 827-828, 830-831	20
Senate	4108, 4124-4127	5
		34

H – 1076

CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS
2010

VOL.53
PART 4
895– 1168

Bill Number 5529, AN ACT CONCERNING AN EXEMPTION FROM THE ADMISSIONS TAX AT RENTSCHLER FIELD, favorable report of the Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Aresimowicz of the 30th district of Berlin, you have the floor, sir.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

I ask that this item be placed on the Consent agenda please.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the Chamber is a placement of this item on Consent.

Is there objection? Is there objection?

Seeing and hearing none, so ordered.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 190?

THE CLERK:

On page 12, Calendar 190, Substitute for House Bill Number 5202, AN ACT CONCERNING TELECOMMUTING OPTIONS FOR STATE EMPLOYEES, favorable report of the Committee on Government Administration and Elections.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Ryan of the 139th, you have the

floor, sir.

REP. RYAN (139th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage the bill.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the Chamber is acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Please proceed sir.

REP. RYAN (139th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Due to the number of factors, including rising energy costs, increased traffic congestion and costly office overhead and overtime, telecommuting has become more and more attractive to employers, in public and private alike. Many states, including Connecticut, have telecommuting programs for state employees and have seen employees' costs drop even as employee productivity increases.

This bill before us strengthens existing law so that telecommuting for state employees is more broadly encouraged and promoted. It offers greater options for telecommuting that will bring the state on board

with an initiative that many private companies in Connecticut and across the nation have embraced.

However, even in Connecticut, telecommuting options for state employees remain extremely limited. What this bill does is requires the Department of Administrative Services to develop guidelines for telecommuting. It transfers the authority for approving telecommuting requests from the Department of Administrative Services to the agency head and -- feeling that the agency head best knows the operation or needs of their respective agencies and should be granted authority over the processes which would approve such guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of the passage of the bill.

Further on the bill? Any amendments perhaps or -- further on the bill?

Representative Cafero of the 142nd. Good afternoon sir, you have the floor.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very

much.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Chamber, I stand in strong support of the bill that's before us. As we know, with each passing day, our options and alternatives in running an affordable state government diminish. Here is one opportunity that we have not taken full advantage of. The private sector world is recognizing more and more the benefits of telecommuting. The fact that this bill will allow us to possibly expand those opportunities within state government and possibly achieve savings is an excellent step in the right direction.

I thank all those who worked on this from both sides of the aisle, and I would urge your support.

Thank you.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Cafero.

Representative Noujaim of the brass city, you have the floor, sir.

REP. NOUJAIM (74th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. NOUJAIM (74th):

Mr. Speaker, I apologize for speaking after the Minority Leader, but as a ranking member of the Labor Committee, this bill came before us. And, Mr. Speaker, when this bill came before us, I thought of one thing, that these days technology has changed our minds and our way of doing business so much. And with technology, also, there is one thing that we should always gain and try to gain, Mr. Speaker, and that is trust.

So technology and trust are two things that probably in the past they were not very prevalent. And, Mr. Speaker, several years ago, when I was on a speaking and teaching tour, I was teaching a seminar for a company in New York State. I may not want to tell you the name of the company, Mr. Speaker, but -- but the company stands for like -- the company is -- stands for -- I don't want to say the name of the company but it, like, stands from IBM.

So, Mr. Speaker, I worked for that company and this was about 15 years ago. The company had six -- 667 employees, but they only had 200 cubicles. And what the employees would do they would come in, they'd plug in, they'd get -- they retrieve their data and

then they take it and then go and work at home. So these practices have been throughout in the private industries for the past several, several years.

So based on the fact, Mr. Speaker, we are bringing this technology and (inaudible) to our state government so I truly, truly support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it as well.

Good to see you there, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative. Nice to see you as well.

Representative Sawyer of the 55th, you have the floor, madam.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen this proposal before and we're very pleased that it's here today. What we do know is that we have significant congestion in this state on the highways. And this proposal was brought forth in future -- prior iterations to save gasoline, to take cars off the road, to make it easier for people to maneuver across Connecticut.

So we're very pleased that the state has decided to do this and moving it forward through this Chamber,

and it'll have my support.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Sawyer.

Further on this bill? I think I'm fishing around for maybe a screening amendment.

Representative Ryan, do you have such a -- such a document in your possession now sir?

REP. RYAN (139th):

Thank -- thank you, Mr. Speaker.

After receiving a hint I was able to discern that there was a screening amendment to this bill. I'd ask the Clerk to call LCO 3447 and ask him to read it.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3447, which shall be designated as House Amendment Schedule A?

THE CLERK:

LCO 3447, House "A", offered by Representatives McCluskey, Olson and Ryan.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative seeks to leave the chamber to summarize. Without objection, please proceed, sir.

REP. RYAN (139th):

Well, actually, sir, I asked him to read it but I

can read it. In line 26, strike "upon" and insert "as required by" in lieu thereof. Obviously just a small technical change that we want to make to make a good bill better, and I move for adoption.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Questions or remarks on House A? Questions or remarks on House A?

If not, I'll try your minds, all those in favor please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Opposed?

The ayes have it.

House A is adopted.

Further on the bill as amended? Further on the bill as amended?

If not, staff and guests please return to the well. House members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members please report to the chamber. The House is taking a roll call vote. Members to the

chamber please.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Please check the board to make sure your vote has been properly cast.

If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will please take a tally. Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5202, as amended by House A.

Total Number voting		143
Necessary for adoption	72	
Those voting Yea	143	
Those voting Nay	0	
Those absent and not voting	8	

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The bill as amended is passed.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 34 -- three four?

THE CLERK:

On page four, Calendar 34, Substitute for House Bill Number 5113, AN ACT CONCERNING BILLING FOR SERVICES COVERED BY LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE BY MANAGED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES, favorable report by the Committee on Insurance.

S – 610

CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS
2010

VOL. 53
PART 13
3842 – 4128

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar page 9, Calendar 445, House Bill 5202, move to place on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar page 9, Calendar 447, House Bill 5392, move to place on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar -- calendar page 9, Calendar 450, House Bill 5529, move to place the item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 451, House Bill 5535, move to place the item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Calling from Agenda Number 4, Substitute for Senate Bill 201.

Senate Agenda Number 8, Substitute for House Bill 5398, Substitute for House -- Senate Bill 175, Substitute for Senate Bill 302.

Returning to the calendar -- beginning on calendar page 5, Calendar Number 315, House Bill 5264.

Calendar page 6, Calendar 378, Substitute for or -- correction -- House Bill 5197.

Calendar page 8, Calendar -- correction, returning back to page 5, Calendar 295, Substitute for House Bill 5114 -- correction, not Calendar 295, it's Calendar 294, House Bill 5391.

Returning to calendar page 6, Calendar Number 378, House Bill 5197.

Calendar page 8, Calendar Number 440, Substitute for House Bill 5113. Calendar page 441 -- Calendar 441, Substitute for House Bill 5109.

Calendar page 9, Calendar 444, House Bill 5500.

Calendar 5 -- 41 --

Calendar page 9, Calendar 444, House Bill 5500; Calendar 4555, House Bill 5202; Calendar 445, House Bill 5392; Calendar 450, House Bill 5529.

Calendar page 10, Calendar 461, House Bill 5207; Calendar 483, House Bill 5244.

Calendar 484, on page 11, House Bill 5383; Calendar 487, House Bill 5220; Calendar 488, House Bill 5297; Calendar 490, 5425 -- House; Calendar 496, House Bill 5497; Calendar 509, House Bill 5126.

Calendar page 14, Calendar 511, House Bill 5527; Calendar 514, House Bill 5426; Calendar 516, House Bill 5393.

Calendar page 15, Calendar 520, House Bill 5336; Calendar 521, House Bill 5424; Calendar 523, House Bill 5223; Calendar 525, House Bill 5255.

Calendar page 16, Calendar 531, House Bill 5004.

Calendar page 17, Calendar 533, House Bill 5436; Calendar 540, House Bill 5494; Calendar 543, House Bill 5399.

Calendar page 18, Calendar 544, House Bill 5434; Calendar 547, House Bill 5196; Calendar 548, House Bill 5533; Calendar 549, House Bill 5387; Calendar 550, House Bill 5471; Calendar 551, House Bill 5413; Calendar 552, House Bill 5163; Calendar 553, House Bill 5159.

Calendar page 19, Calendar 554, House Bill 5164.

Calendar page 20, Calendar 556, House Bill 5498; Calendar 557, House Bill 5270; 559, House Bill 5407; 562, House Bill 5253; and House Bill -- Calendar 563, House Bill 5340; Calendar 567, House Bill 5371; and Calendar 573, House Bill 5371.

Mr. President, I believe that completes the items --

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, could you please give me on Calendar 567, do you have 5516, sir?

THE CLERK:

What -- what calendar?

THE CHAIR:

567 on page 22.

THE CLERK:

It's 5516.

THE CHAIR:

Yes, sir. Okay.

Machine's open.

THE CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Have all Senators voted? Please check your vote. The machine will be locked. The Clerk will call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar Number 2.

Total number voting	35
Necessary for Adoption	18
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar Number 2 passes.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes, Mr. President.

Mr. President -- Mr. President, before moving to adjourn, I would like to ensure the entire chamber will wish Laura Stefon, Senator McDonald's aide, my former intern, a happy birthday.

And with that -- and with that, Mr. President, I would move the Senate stand adjourn

JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS

LABOR AND
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
PART 1
1 – 352

2010

We'll go back and forth between Legislators and the public, because it is quarter past three. So -- is Representative Themis Klarides here? Klarides.

Oh, I didn't see you, Themis.

REP. KLARIDES: I was hiding.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Yes. On purpose?

REP. KLARIDES: I can't say.

Thank you, Senator Prague, Representative Ryan, Ranking Members Noujaim and Guglielmo and members of the Labor Committee. I'm here to testify actually on two bills, the first being House Bill 5202, AN ACT CONCERNING TELECOMMUTING OPTIONS FOR STATE EMPLOYEES.

This is a concept that the House Republican Office has proposed in the past, and although we -- our proposal is somewhat different than this proposal, we do agree with it overall, and we're hoping that the Legislature as a whole can find some common ground to move forward with this.

Due to a number of factors, including rising energy costs, increased traffic congestion and costly overhead and overtime, telecommuting has become more and more attractive to employers, public and private alike. As you know, the state's existing telecommuting program authorizes the Department of Administrative Services to develop and implement guidelines for telecommuting.

We believe that this program is designed well and works well. We would only suggest that perhaps DAS review its program to identify

additional employees that may avail itself of this program and who may be eligible. We do not agree with the underlying language of the bill, which appears to mandate DAS to allow all state employees to telecommute.

I think we can and should realize that different aspects of state government have different needs and would -- some would be more beneficial and some would not work and would not be a good fit for telecommuting.

The legislature itself could provide leadership in this area through the Joint Committee on Legislative Management. We had that opportunity last year, and we didn't avail ourselves of it. Hopefully, this year will be different.

States with an active telecommuting program have turned thousands of lost commuting hours into productive work, saved workers millions in gas bills and reduced congestion and pollution. For example, the state of Arizona converted 181 hundred thousand hours of commuting into time-productive work and reduced air pollution by 175,000 pounds.

However, as important as this telecommuting is, we also think that it's not the only solution. As usual, in the Legislature, we try and look at the big picture as much as possible, and even though we think telecommuting is great and is very productive in what we've done so far, we think that there could be more that can help us.

Along with expanding this telecommuting, we also proposed allowing state agencies, where feasible, to either close one day per week or

rotate their workforce on a reduced four-day workweek.

The state of Utah implemented a four-day workweek in 2008, and, by all accounts, it has been a rousing success. Their program resulted in 13 percent reduction in energy use, employees have saved an estimated $6 million in gasoline costs, and greenhouse gas emissions have been cut by more than 12,000 metric tons per year.

Even more importantly, by staying open more hours during the remaining four days, state offices became more accessible. I don't know about you, but when I call an office to make an appointment for something, and on the rare occasion somebody actually tells me they're not closing at 4:30 or 5:00 or 5:30 -- if it's a doctor, for example -- just to use that as an example -- and they say it's open until 7:00 one night a week, I'm thrilled, because obviously, most of us can't get there by 4:30 or 5:00.

So the fact that if we had a four-day workweek instead of closing at 5:00, for example, we could stay open until 6:00 or 7:00, and that could make people avail themselves possibly after work or before work.

I encourage the Committee to take ideas contained in this proposal into consideration. I think we all agree on the benefits of all of this. We may not agree exactly as to how we're going to get there, but I think there's a lot of common ground that we can hopefully come to an agreement in the end.

Thank you.

JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS

LABOR AND
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
PART 2
353 - 682

2010

the residents of Connecticut. If this bill becomes law, employers will be faced with making decisions that can negatively affect employees much greater than being paid for a few sick days a year. Simply said, this bill is bad for business, it's bad for job opportunities, bad for economic development and bad for the economy of the state of Connecticut. To be pro-jobs, you must be pro-business. One does not exist without the other.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

REP. RYAN: Thank you. Do you have any questions concerning Miss Ward's testimony?

Okay.

Thank you. Thank you for coming in.

And Natasha Pierre, you're next.

Thank you.

NATASHA PIERRE: Good afternoon, Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of the committee.

I'm Natasha Pierre. I'm the Legislative Director at the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. I have submitted written testimony in support of House Bill 5202, AN ACT CONCERNING TELECOMMUTING OPTIONS FOR STATE EMPLOYEES as one avenue of having family-friendly policies -- also as an avenue to allow elders to remain in the workforce. And I will provide oral testimony obviously in support of Senate Bill 63, AN ACT MANDATING

committed that crime, again, say seven years, ten years, we're not sure of the exact number -- that can be debated -- but they should still have the opportunity to work, and why -- why bar them for life from -- from ever working again in -- in that -- in an area where they may be qualified.

That may be a little more controversial, but I think it's important that people have a chance to -- to really be recognized for having rehabilitated and for having learned from their past mistakes and that there should be a time limit. And then I think the oversight issue was already raised also. That's very important to us.

So I guess that's all I want to say for this evening. Thank you for -- for listening.

SENATOR GOMES: I want to thank you very much for waiting to testify.

SARAH DIAMOND: Yes.

SENATOR GOMES: All right.

SARAH DIAMOND: Thank you.

SENATOR GOMES: Anybody else want to say something?

Right about this time, this is the last person, the lights are supposed to shine and bells go off and you get a prize, but you don't, Paul.

PAUL FILSON: Batting clean-up for the Boston Red Sox.

SB163
HB5202

Well, good evening, Senator Gomes, and distinguished members and patient members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

I'm here to talk about two very important bills. I just thought, in keeping with the theme, I'll start with Senate Bill 63.

I'm the -- my name is Paul Filson. I'm the Director of the Service Employees International Union State Council, which represents over 55,000 dues-paying members in Connecticut, and I won't say much other than to say that we do represent the bus drivers and janitors, and we represent food service workers and healthcare workers, many of whom don't have paid sick leave.

And I'd like to take out the violin for, you know, when Kia Murrell was speaking. The violin for Walmart, you know, because they should provide sick days, and I'm sure it's a huge burden on them if they had to do that, or McDonalds, or -- or Burger King or these multi-national bus companies where we represent the workers who drive school children and are forced to drive their school buses sick.

First Students, a multi-national corporation, Laid Law was a multi-national corporation making millions -- tens of millions of dollars in profits every year. I think they can afford it. My violin does not go out to them.

But I'd also like to speak in favor of House Bill 5202, AN ACT CONCERNING TELECOMMUNICATIONS OPTIONS, which should be passed for several reasons. First, it would allow certain state employees to be much more efficient in the performance of their jobs

during these hard economic times when some criticize government for being overly bureaucratic. Expanding the use of telecommuting would demonstrates the state's commitment to smart use of both human resources as well as energy resources.

Let me explain. There are more than a few state employees are currently not allowed to telecommute, forcing them to drive into Hartford just to clock in when their day's work is to visit clients or other sites in the field much closer to their homes. House Bill 5202 is needed because though the state has telecommuting options in the books, these options are not being utilized and only a couple of hundred employees out of a workforce of 50,000 are able to telecommute.

Telecommuting is being a mainstay of corporate America, and we all know corporations don't usually implement work options that cost money and hurt profits. And in fact, today over 14 million people telecommute some of the time in America. Companies are finding that telecommuters are more efficient and more productive.

These companies save a lot of money, and our environment is helped too, since fewer cars are on the road for less time each day. The Department of Administration -- Administrative Services has telecommuting rules on the books. Unfortunately, very few workers are given approval to participate in the program. This bill would make it easier for employees to get approval from other government agencies.

We've suggested some language changes, which clear up some possible problems, and you have those suggestions in written testimony

provided. And so those two bills would be excellent bills for passage at the General Assembly.

I know it's late. Thank you very much for waiting around so long to hear from so many people, and I urge you to pass House Bill 5202 as well as Senate Bill 63.

Thank you.

SENATOR GOMES: Any questions of Paul?

Paul, you're a lucky guy. Nobody wants to talk to you.

PAUL FILSON: And, you know, actually we were going to have several members come and -- and testify today. One of them is out sick. She has sick days. But she could be actually working from home telecommuting. She works in the IT department for the state and is a big advocate of telecommuting. She could have been productive and gotten some work done at home, because the job that she does can be done at home too. The state could save some money.

SENATOR GOMES: Tell her your whole (inaudible).

PAUL FILSON: Definitely help -- every -- every little bit, so we're -- we've got sick days, we've got telecommuting.

Thanks. Thanks a lot.

SENATOR GOMES: Is there anybody here that isn't on our list that would like to tell -- testify?

What are those two doing over there? They must work here.

JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS

LABOR AND
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
PART 3
683 – 1027

2010

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY OF LINDA J. YELMINI

DIRECTOR OF LABOR RELATIONS

Raised Bill No. 5202 – AN ACT CONCERNING TELECOMMUTING OPTIONS FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of Labor of and Public Employees Committee. This bill allows agencies to develop telecommuting and work at home plans on a decentralized basis under guidelines established by the Department of Administrative Services. While the Bill removes telecommuting and work at home plans from collective bargaining, such plans would still be subject to other types of challenge when one employee was granted the right to work at home and another employee was not. An employee could sue the state in superior court and/or make a claim under the state and federal employment and discrimination laws.

To allow employees to work at home on a consistent basis exposes the State to a significant risk of claims under workers' compensation in a "workplace", the employee's home, over which the State has no control.

Many private employers have reduced or completely eliminated these types of programs because experience has shown that lower productivity and lack of management control is often the result of these programs. Especially where state employees are responsible to the taxpayers of this state, the existing programs should not be expanded beyond present applications. The duty and responsibility of state agencies to clients and taxpayers should be of paramount importance.

Based upon the foregoing, this Bill should not be passed.

An independent, nonpartisan office of the Connecticut General Assembly

Testimony of

Julia Evans Starr, Executive Director
Connecticut Commission on Aging

House Bill 5202: An Act Concerning Telecommuting Options for State Employees
Committee on Labor and Public Employees

February 25, 2010

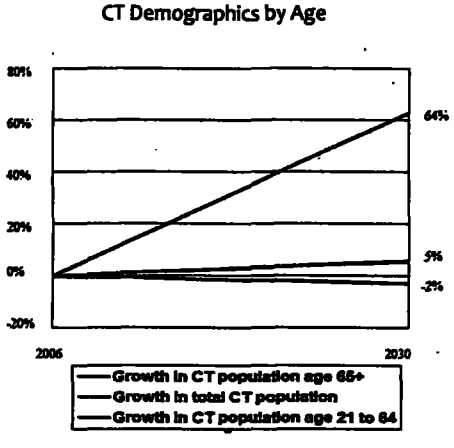
Thank you for this opportunity to comment today on an issue of import to older adults, families with children and to the effective, efficient administration of state government.

As you know, the Connecticut Commission on Aging (CoA) is an independent, nonpartisan state agency that is part of the legislative branch of government. We are devoted to preparing our state for a burgeoning aging population while promoting policies that enhance the lives of the present and future generations of older adults. For sixteen years, the Commission has served as an effective leader in statewide efforts to promote choice, independence and dignity for Connecticut's older adults and persons with disabilities.

In these difficult budget times, research-based initiatives, statewide planning efforts, vision and creative thinking are all needed and provided by the CoA. We pledge to continue to assist our state in finding solutions to our fiscal problems, while keeping its commitments to critical programs and services.

House Bill 5202 strengthens existing law so that telecommuting for state employees is more broadly encouraged and promoted. Offering greater options for telecommuting would bring the state on board with an initiative that many private companies in Connecticut and across the nation have embraced. In fact, Telecommute Connecticut! is a state government initiative, publicly endorsed by Governor Rell, to encourage and facilitate telecommuting options for private companies; yet, telecommuting options for state employees remain extremely limited.

Addressing the cost, satisfaction, and quality of the state workforce, in meaningful ways, is ripe for opportunity. CoA brings a unique perspective to this discussion. We have produced a series of research reports about how retirement has been and will continue to be redefined, particularly as the Baby Boomers age. The Redefining Retirement Years initiative was launched in 2006 in keeping with the Commission's statutory mandate to assess emerging issues affecting Connecticut's present and future generations of older adults. With medical advances, individuals are now living longer, higher quality lives, long past the standard age of retirement. Our work and national studies show that retirement is no longer only about golf and relaxation; most retirees want to stay engaged in their communities, and many want or need to continue to work, albeit with a great deal more flexibility.



State Capitol • 210 Capitol Avenue • Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860.240.5200 • Website www.cga.ct.gov/coa
LTC website: www.ct.gov/longtermcare

Focus groups that the Commission ran in 2006 in partnership with the state Department of Labor and the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission examined the changing demographic of the state's public and private workforce. The research showed that older adults are looking for shorter work weeks, durational projects or other flexible options, instead of rigid daily work schedules, five days a week, fifty weeks a year. Importantly, older adults have institutional knowledge and expertise that is difficult to replace. Private companies who have offered flexible schedules for their workers have seen lower turnover, less use of sick leave, increased employee productivity and improved morale—and significant cost savings.

Last year, we enlisted a UConn Law student, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of workforce flexibility in the private sector, common myths, other states' initiatives, current Connecticut law and the benefits of adopting a culture of workplace flexibility in Connecticut. This research uncovered a variety of initiatives in other states, such as Florida, Virginia and Arizona, which were the basis for this proposal.

State government, as the largest employer in the state of Connecticut, should lead by example. What has happened to date is that state employees retire, and when the agency decides that their knowledge and expertise are still needed, the employees are hired back for a short time; this has led to public and media outrage over "double dipping."

But this "double dipping" does not need to occur. We can design our personnel policies to facilitate the types of workplace flexibility that we know older adults want and which will help our state plan better moving forward—and save the state money.

Therefore, in addition to strengthening telecommuting for state employees, the CoA recommends expanding the bill to cover additional, proven, options including: voluntary schedule reduction, flexible work schedules, and a phased-in retirement option. We ask that you respectfully review SB 1144, An Act Concerning Flexible Work Schedules and Telecommuting Options for State Employees. This is a bill the CoA developed last year with the GAE committee.

First, a voluntary schedule reduction initiative would allow individuals of all ages to be more productive during their working hours and, with supervisor approval, to gain more hours of time for themselves and their families. Employees would, of course, have their salaries proportionally reduced. The second initiative calls for flexible work schedules, again with supervisor approval. Although many jobs done by state employees must be done during set hours, many other tasks (such as report writing) could be done when more convenient for employees. These first two initiatives, although designed with older workers in mind, would certainly benefit younger employees with families as well.

The third initiative is an innovative idea that could result in significant cost savings, without the loss of knowledge that is inherent to an Early Retirement Incentive Program. The "phased-in retirement" initiative would allow employees within five years of retirement to reduce their hours to begin their transition to a new lifestyle, and hopefully, to begin succession planning for the agency once they have departed. Under this initiative, employees would still accrue retirement benefits as if they had not reduced their hours; the state would save money during the employees' last few years of tenure with the agency. This is a win-win proposal that should be on the table right now, as our state struggles with an enormous budget gap.

We ask for your support of these initiatives, which, in addition to helping older adults continue to be productive, also generate with significant cost savings.

We would be most pleased to work with this committee and other interested parties on this legislation moving forward. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission office, at (860) 240-5200.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of this important issue.

State of Connecticut

NANCY WYMAN
COMPTROLLER

MARK E. OJAKIAN
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER

Hartford

Testimony of State Comptroller Nancy Wyman
Before The Labor & Public Employees Committee
February 25, 2010

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Ryan, Senator Guglielmo, Representative Noujaim, and distinguished members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee. For the record, I am State Comptroller Nancy Wyman and I thank you for the opportunity to offer my continued support for ***Raised House Bill 5202*** ***"An Act Concerning Telecommuting Options For State Employees."***

I strongly urge passage of this proposal, which transfers the authority for approving telecommuting requests from the Department of Administrative Services to the agency head. Currently requests for employees to telecommute are approved solely by DAS. I would respectfully submit that the agency head best knows the operational needs of their respective agency and should be granted authority over this process within approved guidelines. The legislation mandates DAS to adopt guidelines and specifies the goals to be achieved by the guidelines.

I have been working with DAS in efforts to get telecommuting approval for a critical employee to my agency. The proposal before you would give state Commissioners and agency heads some flexibility with regards to extending telecommuting to temporarily disabled workers, or recovering employees who have the capacity to work but are temporarily unable to travel to their work sites. Such a provision would be valuable to me as an agency head grappling with diminished budgets, retirements, and increased workloads.

I am aware of many large private employers that encourage employees, who have the capacity to work from home, to do so. This has become a valuable alternative both for the employees and for the company itself, due to site closures, consolidations and an increased need for office space.

While I understand that these options may not be available to all state employees, many do have the technical capacity and accessibility to workplace information to make this an effective program. A growing number of states are exploring telecommuting as a way to save money and relieve traffic congestion, but the public sector remains well behind the private sector in this regard.

While some of the long-term economic and environmental benefits of telecommuting may not be achieved for years, I believe this proposal is a meaningful first step and I urge the Legislature to approve this measure.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Ps 19, Lm 1

TO: MEMBERS OF THE LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE

FROM: CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, LOCAL 2001 SEIU

DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2010

RE: **PLEASE SUPPORT HB 5202: AAC TELECOMMUTING OPTIONS FOR STATE EMPLOYEES (WITH SUGGESTED AMENDMENT)**

Dear Friends:

Thank you very much for Raising House Bill 5202. Our Union Supports this proposal; and we respectfully request one change to the language contained within Subsection (a). We respectfully contend that the language should be amended because we do not believe that workers' collective bargaining rights should be legislatively restricted or prohibited

Please delete the text: "Such Telecommuting and work at home programs shall not be subject to collective bargaining under the provisions of chapter 68, including, but not limited to, interest arbitration, and such programs and any matter involving an employee or employees participating in such programs shall not constitute the basis for a grievance or be subject to arbitration under any collective bargaining agreement."

In its place, please consider inserting the following text: "The guidelines for any telecommuting and work-at-home programs developed pursuant to this subsection shall be developed by the Commissioner of Administrative Services in cooperation with any interested employee organizations separate and distinct from any collective bargaining discussions, negotiations or arbitrations between such employee organizations and their employers."

The following are the reasons to Support HB 5202 (As Amended):

We respectfully contend that expanded telecommuting options can increase efficiencies among certain designated employees in state service, and will reduce traffic and be beneficial to our environment – All good things!

Below are a couple of examples (based upon work performed by our members at DEP and DDS) that support our strong belief that an expanded state employee telecommuting program will truly be good for state government and for our taxpayers:

"Susan Jones" (hypothetical person) works at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Susan's job is to travel to different regulated environmental sites throughout the state to inspect and review compliance. Susan lives in Southington. Currently, Susan leaves her house in Southington and travels east for 30 miles to DEP Headquarters in Hartford to "punch in." Susan then leaves DEP and travels 60 miles west to Danbury to inspect a site. After the inspection, Susan travels 60 miles east all of the way back to DEP in Hartford to type up her inspection report. At the end of the day, Susan leaves DEP and drives 30 miles west to her home in Southington. Susan travelled 180

miles; 120 of which would have been reimbursed by the State at 55 cents per mile (the round trip between DEP and Danbury). Susan burned a lot of gas, threw a lot of hydro-carbons into the environment, contributed to traffic on the roadways, and spent 3 hours doing nothing but driving. Susan could have been working on other projects during all or part of the 120 mile drive-time.

If Susan were allowed to participate in a telecommuting program, her day would be potentially much more productive and certainly much better for the environment. She would also have wasted less gas driving around the state. Under the telecommuting program, Susan may have been able to leave her house in Southington go directly to the site in Danbury (30 mile drive). After the inspection, Susan could have travelled back to her house in Southington and typed-up the inspection report (30 mile drive). In this example, Susan only drove 60 miles; and the State would only have to reimburse for 60 miles; instead of 180 miles. Presumably, Susan would also have had more time to work on other projects and go out and perform other inspections. The Environment and the roadway conditions also benefit by virtue of the fact that Susan drove 120 fewer miles under the telecommuting program.

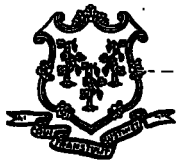
A similar situation arises for the teachers in our Birth-to-Three program at the Department of Developmental Services. These teachers are assigned to visit disabled children throughout the state; and write follow-up reports. For the same reasons outlined for Ms. Jones above, it would be a lot better for the State if the DDS Birth-to-Three teachers were allowed to telecommute—they would not have to use a lot of time and fuel travelling to the DDS Office in East Hartford essentially for the purpose of Punching IN/OUT and writing reports. The teachers could definitely work with more kids; and obtain fewer costly mileage reimbursements under a telecommuting program; and even do the Environment and our roadways a great service.

Telecommuting programs should even be seriously considered for state employees who don't necessarily have "field" jobs like Ms. Jones at DEP and the Birth-to-Three Teachers at DDS. The state of Connecticut currently spends tons of money on office space and parking lots. Maybe two computer programmers at the Department of Information Technologies could telecommute, for example, on a part-time "3 day in office – 2 day telecommute" schedule; these two folks could share an office/cubicle and even share a parking space; thereby saving the state money.

Obviously, we understand that there are many state workers who are <u>not</u> eligible for telecommuting programs (e.g., corrections officers who work in our prison facilities). We also understand that some folks may be suspicious of telecommuting programs based upon the old-school belief that some people won't do their work at home, and that they "need to be at their desks in their offices so that their bosses can keep an eye on them." However, using the examples of Ms. Jones at DEP and the Birth-to-Three Teachers at DDS from above, the fact is that these folks have responsibility for writing a certain number of case reports, regardless as to whether they are writing the case reports at home or in the office. These folks will also be able to see more clients and prepare more reports if they don't have to spend as much driving to and from their state agency offices.

Thanks very much for your Support of <u>House Bill 5202.</u>

Ps 5, Lm 9



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE THEMIS KLARIDES
ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH DISTRICT

23 EAST COURT
DERBY, CONNECTICUT 06418

HOME: (203) 735-5911
OFFICE: 1-800-842-1423
FAX: (860) 240-0207
E-MAIL: Themis.Klarides@housegop.ct.gov

DEPUTY REPUBLICAN LEADER

MEMBER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Testimony before the Labor Committee
February 25, 2010
In Support of House Bill 5202
"An Act Concerning Telecommuting Options for State Employees"

Chairs Prague and Ryan, Ranking Members Noujaim and Guglielmo and members of the Labor Committee, I am here to testify on HB 5202 - "An Act Concerning Telecommuting Options for State Employees." This is a concept the House Republican Office has proposed in the past and although our proposal is somewhat different than HB 5202, I felt it important to comment on the bill and also our proposal in hopes that the Committee and the legislature as a whole can find common ground on this worthwhile initiative.

Due to a number of factors, including rising energy costs, increased traffic congestion, and costly office overhead and overtime, telecommuting has become more and more attractive to employers, public and private alike. Many states – including the State of Connecticut - have telecommuting programs for state employees and have seen employee costs drop even as employee productivity increases.

As you know, the state's existing telecommuting program authorizes the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to develop and implement guidelines for telecommuting. We believe that the program as it's designed works well and we would only suggest that perhaps DAS review its program to identify additional employees who might be eligible for the program that might not be taking advantage of it. We do not agree with the underlying language of the bill which appears to mandate DAS to allow all state employees to telecommute. I think we can and should realize that telecommuting cannot work in every instance and that is best left to the agency management and employees to determine.

The legislature itself could provide leadership in this area right now. All that is required is approval from the Joint Committee on Legislative Management in order for legislative

employees to be able to telecommute. Unfortunately, the legislative leadership missed this opportunity to lead when we proposed this option last year.

States with an active telecommuting program have turned thousands of lost commuting hours into productive work, saved workers millions in gas bills and reduced pollution and congestion. For example, the state of Arizona converted 181,000 hours of commuting time into productive working hours and reduced air pollution by 175,000 pounds. And a recent national study by the Consumer Electronics Association estimated that telecommuting saves enough energy in the traditional workplace to power one million households for a year and saved 3.9 million telecommuters approximately 840 million gallons of gasoline.

However, as important as telecommuting is in reducing state costs, increasing efficiency, and protecting the environment, it is only one solution. Along with expanding telecommuting options, we also proposed allowing state agencies, where feasible, to either close one day per week or rotate their workforce on a reduced 4-day workweek while still providing essential state services. Under this proposal, state employees would be required to work their same hours within a 4-day schedule. The state of Utah implemented a 4-day workweek in 2008 and by all accounts, it has been a remarkable success. Their program resulted in a 13% reduction in energy use, employees have saved an estimated $6 million in gasoline costs, and greenhouse-gas emissions have been cut by more than 12,000 metric tons per year.

Even more importantly, by staying open more hours during the remaining 4 days, state offices became *more* accessible. Instead of having to take time off during normal business hours to do business with the state, folks can take advantage of the increased hours of operation during a "4-10" schedule.

I encourage the Committee to take the ideas contained in our proposal into consideration as HB 5202 moves through the legislative process. I look forward to working on this issue with you because we should be doing everything we can to promote government efficiency by reducing state energy costs while still providing essential services to the citizens of our state.

AFT Connecticut
AFT, AFL-CIO

Healthcare
Higher Education
Public Employees
PSRP
Teachers

35 Marshall Road
Rocky Hill, CT 06067
860/257-9782
Fax: 860/257-8214
Toll Free: 888/398-3373
www.aftct.org

Sharon Palmer
PRESIDENT

Melodie Peters
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Leo Canty
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Thomas Bruenn
SECRETARY-TREASURER

VICE PRESIDENTS
John Altieri
Ronda Barker
Erin Benham
Dennis Bogusky
Joanne Chapin
David Cicarella
Art Costa, Jr.
Tom Culley
Tanya Crump
Kathie Daly
Patti Fusco
Betty Gadson
Andrea Johnson
Patrica M. Keavney
Phyllis Kornfeld
Paul Krell
Ann Lohrand
Jean Morningstar
Chuck Morrell
Harry Rodriguez
Kathleen Sanner
Rick Tanasi

TESTIMONY
SHARON M. PALMER

LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE

February 25, 2010

Good afternoon, Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of the Committee. I am Sharon Palmer, President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse 28,000 member union representing professionals in both the public and private sector.

I would like today to remark briefly on several bills and put AFT Connecticut on record regarding our positions.

S.B. 63 An Act Mandating Employers to Provide Paid Sick Leave - AFT Connecticut strongly supports this bill even though we have very few members without paid sick leave. As a civilized, developed nation and state we need to catch up with the rest of the developed nations. America has the most productive workers in the world. People need to be able to take care of themselves and their families. In the big picture, we all benefit from that. Please support this bill.

H.B. 5202 An Act Concerning Telecommuting Options for State Employees - AFT Connecticut certainly supports the concept of telecommuting for state employees. We do, however, have concerns about leaving telecommuting and work-at-home programs out of the collective bargaining process.

Thank you for your time and the hearing opportunity.

Council 4 AFSCME Testimony Labor Committee 2/25/10

My name is Brian Anderson. I am a legislative and political representative for Council 4 AFSCME, a union of 35,000 Connecticut public and private employee members.

Council 4 supports SB 63, AA Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave To Employees. The respected Institute for Women's Policy Research estimates that only 60% of Connecticut's workers have sick leave. That means that over 655 thousand workers in our state do not. Institute research shows that granting sick days economically benefits workers, employers and our society in the long run.

Economic benefits aside, this is a common sense public safety bill. When workers report to work sick, there is a good chance that they may spread the sickness. This makes even more workers sick and risks spreading the illness to even more people. This is a particular problem when these workers are in service industry jobs such as working at a restaurant, hotel or retail establishment. A sick worker could unwittingly and unintentionally spread the flu or other ailment to the very customers that they serve. Unfortunately, it is workers in just such jobs that often are not given paid sick days off by their employers. **We submit a fact sheet from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services concerning the deadly avian flu. It says "The Centers for Disease Control ... and other leading public health experts agree that it is not a question of IF a pandemic will occur, but WHEN it will occur." It goes on to say in comparing an avian flu outbreak to the 1918-1919 flu pandemic that "if a pandemic of similar severity occurred today,... two million Americans could die."** This bill will safeguard the public.

Council 4 also urges you to pass:

- HB 5202, AAC Telecommuting Options for State Employees – but only if the language affecting collective bargaining is removed. One or our concerns is that an employer could potentially mandate an employee to work from home and then subsequently fire them – leaving them no recourse to grieve the matter. We saw enough "whistle blower" retaliation in the Rowland days to feel comfortable with the bill the way it is written.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Pg 8, Line 4

COMMISSION OFFICERS
Adrienne Farrar Houël, *Chair*
Cecilia J. Woods, *Vice Chair*
Denise Rodosevich, *Secretary*
Elizabeth Donohue, *Treasurer*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Teresa C. Younger

Connecticut General Assembly

Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

The State's leading force for women's equality

COMMISSIONERS
Yvonne R. Davis
Barbara DeBaptiste
Carrie Gallagher
Kristin LaFleur
Tanya Meck
Toni Moran
Melanie O'Brien
Jean L. Rexford
Helene Shay
Cindy R. Slane
Susan O. Storey
Patricia E.M. Whitcombe

HONORARY MEMBERS
Connie Dice
Patricia T. Hendel
Patricia Russo

Testimony of
Natasha M. Pierre, JD, MSW
Legislative Director
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee
February 25, 2010

In Support of:
S.B. 63, AA Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees
H.B. 5202, AAC Telecommuting Options for State Employees

Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of S.B. 63, AA Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees and H.B. 5202, AAC Telecommuting Options for State Employees.

HB5202

S.B. 63, AA Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees

PCSW supports passage of S.B. 63, which would require employers of 50 or more employees to provide paid sick leave to their employees for the employee's or an employee's child's sickness, and to handle sexual assault or family violence issues.

Women and families are disproportionately affected by the lack of paid sick leave, in large part because most women remain the main caregivers of their families. If a woman needs to take a sick day for herself or a dependent family member but lacks paid leave, her options are limited: take unpaid leave and possibly risk her economic well-being or neglect her own health and/or the health of her loved ones.

Seventy-one percent of mothers with children under age 18 are in the workforce.[1] Working women are significantly more likely than men to take time off from work to care for a sick child. In the case of an urgently sick child, almost 78% of women take time off from work, while just 26.5% of men take off.[2] Studies show that men tend to put work first, and women adapt their work around their family, including both their children's and husband's work schedules.[3]

---

[1] Families and Work Institute, Times Are Changing: Gender and Generation at Work and at Home, 2009 <http://familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/Times_Are_Changing.pdf>
[2] The American Association of Psychotherapy, Working Women More Likely Than Men to Stay Home With a Sick Child, Spring 2008 <http://www.annalsofpsychotherapy.com/articles/spring08.php?topic=article5>
[3] The American Association of Psychotherapy, Working Women More Likely Than Men to Stay Home With a Sick Child, Spring 2008 <http://www.annalsofpsychotherapy.com/articles/spring08.php?topic=article5>

Additionally, working women find themselves caring for both minor children and aging parents. Women represent more than two-thirds of adults providing substantial assistance to elderly parents,[4] provide an annual average of $1,521 in financial support to elderly parents, and spend and average of 23 hours a week (1,210 hours a year) providing care to elderly parents.[5]

While paid sick days are important for women as caregivers, this reform is also essential in protecting women's economic stability. As the earnings of women in the workforce have increased, so has their contribution to family income. In 2008, employed women in dual-earner households contributed an average of 44% of annual family income.[6] Therefore, without paid sick leave, the loss of a working mother's income could have a detrimental effect on her family's economic well-being.

Lastly, women in Connecticut comprise the majority of career fields that have the ability to easily spread disease.[7] These workers may be disproportionately affected by taking unpaid sick leave because their salaries are typically lower, making their income even more vital to their financial security.

- Healthcare Support Occupations: 87% Women
- Health Technologist and Technicians: 81% Women
- Personal Care and Service Occupations: 74.9% Women
- Education, Training and Library Occupations: 74% Women
- Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations: 54% Women

The PCSW believes paid sick leave is an essential workplace reform that will help working women balance both their careers and their families without risking their economic well-being.

H.B. 5202, AAC Telecommuting Options for State Employees

PCSW also supports passage of H.B. 5202, AAC Telecommuting Options for State Employees, which would enhance telecommuting options. In 2007, we released *A Women's Economic Security Package* which identified allowing greater flexibility in work schedules and reduced work week options, as well as telecommuting as key components to ensuring women's economic stability. Policies that support workers as they provide care for family members or take care of their own health are essential for a strong Connecticut workforce.

Women's employment patterns have changed significantly in the last few decades. However, workplaces have not kept pace. Two-thirds of women who had their first child between 2001 and 2003 worked during their pregnancy, compared with just 44% who gave birth for the first time between 1961 and 1965.[8] In addition, women are working later into their pregnancies. Eighty percent of women who worked while pregnant from 2001 to 2003 worked up to one month or less before their due date compared with 35% who did so in 1961-1965.[9] Providing pregnant women the ability to work from home or take voluntary schedule reductions during the last stage of pregnancy would provide a sense of relief to working women who, due to financial reasons, must remain in the workforce until the birth of their child.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau[10], the majority of working adults who leave for work between 5:30 -7 a.m. are men while the majority of adults who leave for work between 7 a.m. -8:30 a.m. are women. Additionally, more women (26%) than men (20%) leave for work between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. While the Census Bureau does

[4] Richard W. Johnson and Joshua M. Wiener, "A Profile of Frail Older Americans and Their Caregivers," Urban Institute, The Retirement Project Occasional Paper Number 8, February 2006 Table
[5] Charles R. Pierret, "The 'sandwich generation': women caring for parents and children," *Monthly Labor Review*, September 2006, Table 2.
[6] Families and Work Institue, Times Are Changing: Gender and Generation at Work and at Home, 2009 <http://familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/Times_Are_Changing.pdf>
[7] U.S. Census Burea, American Fact Finder 2008-2008 Estimates, Connecticut Civilian Employed Population Over 16 Years of Age, Sex by Industry
[8] <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/employment_occupations/011536.html>.
[9] <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/employment_occupations/011536.html>.
[10] U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Connecticut Commuting Characteristics by Sex