### Legislative History for Connecticut Act

**PA15-17**

**SB963**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>3105-3170</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>792-797</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>99-107, 357-359, 479, 500-503, 543, 545, 545A-545D</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor &amp; Public Employees</td>
<td>(1147-1149), (1154-1155)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives Proceedings

Connecticut State Library

Compiled 2017
Have all the members voted? Please check the board to see that your vote has been properly cast. And if all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6907, as amended by House "A"

Total Number Voting 141
Necessary for Passage 71
Those voting Yea 141
Those voting Nay 0
Those absent and not voting 10

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The bill as amended, passes. [gavel] Will the Clerk please call Calendar No. 515.

CLERK:

On page 38, Calendar No. 515, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on education.

Substitute Senate Bill No. 963, AN ACT CONCERNING A LABOR AND FREE MARKET CAPITALISM CURRICULUM.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):
Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I move acceptance of the Committee's Joint Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill. Representative Fleischmann, you have the floor, sir.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The measure that we have before us has actually been considered by the Education Committee and a few other Committees in a few previous years, and as a result, has had some modifications that reflect thoughts and concerns from both sides of the aisle.

And so as the title of the bill indicates, this measure would now have the State Department of Education prepare an off-the-shelf curriculum available to school districts: The History and Economics of Free Market Capitalism; The History of the Labor Movement and Laws, Thereof; and The Role of Labor and Capitalism in Developing Our American and the World Economic System. It's a balanced approach that does not represent a mandate on any
district. It is a requirement that our State Department of Ed develop this balanced curriculum, which would be made available to districts, which could then avail themselves of it as they see fit.

So I think this is a very thoughtful, balanced measure that reflect the good discussions and input that we’ve had from both sides of the aisle, as well as from the State Department of Education, and I encourage all members to join me in supporting its passage. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Good afternoon, Representative.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I thank the good Chair of the Education Committee for his presentation. I think he covered some of the new developments in the bill. I do have a couple of questions if I may.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please proceed, ma’am.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):
Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. In the fiscal note on the bill, at one of the same time, it explains that the State Board of Education, or the State Department - the State Board, actually, would make available, curriculum materials on this subject matter: labor history and free market capitalism. Then it says, "As of 2015, the State Board of Ed has modified this social studies curriculum to include such topics." So it sounds as though this has already been done. Is that correct? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. As I read the fiscal note, it does appear that the State Board and the State Department of Education have already gotten underway the preparation of this necessary curriculum under this measure. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I thank the Chair for his answer. In that case, do we actually
need a bill if the work is already done? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. In this area, as in many others, it does make a difference whether or not our statutes and our General Assembly chooses to emphasize something. And so while it appears that the State Board of Education may have done something to include these topics, if we pass this here today, it sends a message to all districts that this curriculum is indeed available to all of them, and that they can avail themselves of it and incorporate it into their curriculum, not just for social studies but for history if they so choose. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you. And perhaps the good representative would be able to elaborate for me just a little further on what the word "encourage" means concretely. I thought I saw it in the bill,
but I certainly see it in the fiscal note. That the State Department of Education would make these resourced available and would "encourage" local and regional Boards of Education to include this material in their curricula. What does "encourage" consist of? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through you, as I understand it, the use of that verb in real world terms means that the Commissioner of Education might send a circular to the superintendents across the state, making them aware that this curriculum is there at the State Department of Education, and available for use with students of various ages in the following types of classes. So that all districts would be aware of it, and the maximum number that were interested would avail themselves. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):
Thank you, Madam Speaker. In that event, if this material is to be presented as sort of a "separate sell," if you will, or a "chapter" or a "module?" Is it meant to be presented as part of a whole, or is sort of in isolation? Apart from the continuum of history, and if so, how? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. It's my opinion, and I think the opinion owner of most educators that a good curriculum has continuity to it. And so, rather than have something suddenly appear without context, the expectation would be that the history of capitalism and the labor movement would be incorporated into American history, incorporated into social studies in such a way that it made sense to students in the broader context of their learning. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you. And would this material, therefore, be available to all grades - or all
grades between say, six and twelve, take your choice which grade? Or would it be presented for one grade in particular. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. I think the answer lies somewhere in between the two poles that my good colleague has offered as choices. I think that this would not be material one would expect to show up in for first or second graders, or third graders who have not yet even broached the topic of American history in a serious way. But, one would expect that it would start to show up in middle school and high school where kids are studying those topics. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I thank the Chair of Education. You know, that's a funny - that already provokes a lot of questions for me because one of the - one of the elements here that's mentioned for example, is the collective
bargaining process and it goes on to talk about existing legal protections in the workplace. That could all get pretty sophisticated. If you've ever employed people you know that labor law's a very complex discipline, and has a lot of intricacies, and a lot of different interests that have to be respected, both from the employer's standpoint and the employee's standpoint.

So you can imagine a very synthetic - very superficial kind of presentation for younger kids and something that's much more intricate for people maybe in their last year of high school. And I would think that that would - that would imply that you'd have to have either certainty of who you were aiming for in terms of students, or you really would have to cover the gamut of the ability to comprehend these things. And I think you'd also have to have a pretty clear idea of what it was you were trying to convey. Is it the significance in history? Or is it really how does all this work? For example, again, if you're getting into existing legal protections, then that would clearly - there would have to be, I think, some material in there
that would be useful for people who are going to work.

Significantly though, one of the concerns that I have here, I understand that this is titled: A Labor and Free Market and Capitalism curriculum, but the way that this language is phrased, labor history and law, organized labor, collective bargaining process, existing legal protections, and then you get a little bit into the history of both free market capitalism and labor. It all seems to be coming at this from the point of view of someone who is an employee, but not an employer. Someone who would have to collectively bargain. Someone who would not be in charge of making management decisions.

And that is somewhat disturbing to me, because I think if you're gonna present both, then you need to present both. You need to look at everything from the point owner view from someone who is organizing and is a member of the labor force, and someone perhaps who owns a company, or who has a large staff, or who is, if you will, making the rules through a negotiating, perhaps a collegial
process. But clearly it seems a bit, the way it’s phrased anyway, a bit one-sided.

Now I know, there was an effort to balance this out, but again, the way that the bill is phrased, I would worry that it is somewhat one-sided. Also, when you’re talking labor history, and free market capitalism, bless you, Madam Speaker, when you’re talking about that, you’re leaving out other parts of economic history that have a great deal of influence, I think on the evolution of our culture, like feudal economies. We don’t particularly want to have one now, but they certainly did exist in Western history.

I wonder if - I do have one further question for the good Chair of the Education Committee if I may, Madam Speaker. Do we have any notion of who the primary sources - the primary authors might be that we were dealing with in a course like this? Through you, Madam Speaker.

Representative Fleischmann.

Through you, Madam Speaker. No, the General Assembly doesn’t get involved with that kind of
micromanagement of the State Department of Education or any department, so I would expect that pursuant to the broad language that we have in the bill, there would be an effort, and there has been an effort on the part of the State Department of Education to get a wide array of sources. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you. And I don’t have any further questions for the Chair, so I thank him for his answers. I’m - it is still - and I know we’ve been through a lot with this. This bill comes up almost every year. It’s been mandatory for schools on some occasions. This time it’s not, which I appreciate. But there’s still - to me, there’s still an imbalance here.

I have both worked for people in the course of my career, and I’ve also been in charge of a company where I had to negotiate with people who reported to me. And the issues are very, very different. If you’re going to be an employee, and you - whatever you do, you don’t make the rules,
the rules are made for you, you have to ask for
your raise, you have to ask for your days off, you
can understand you have an interest in negotiating
those things and making sure that your working
conditions are just so. If you’re an employer, you
have questions about things like liability. You
have issues that pertain to, for example, if you
have the very unfortunate experience of needing to
let someone go, there are so owner many issues that
you face. There are so many reasons that you must
consult an attorney, and things that you have to
document.

And if we’re going to teach our children in
schools to aim for the sky, they’ve gotta
understand both sides of the issue, and I don’t
really like to think of them as two sides, but at
least they’re two types of circumstances that you
can be in when you work for a living.

And so to teach free market capitalism as a
philosophy and as history, I think is excellent.
We all need to learn about that. We need to – this
is – this is your basic dialectic here. But if
you’re going to understand how to cope in the
workplace and how to rise, and how to achieve, and
how to mount in your career, then you need to understand how it works as an employee, and how it works as an employer, and you need to look at the other person's situation, in his or her shoes. You need to be able to see the perspective from both sides, and again, the way that this is positioned in the bill, I don't feel that that's there. I do sense an imbalance.

I'm also concerned about the fact that while this has already been prepared, the material is already there, why we then need to go so far as to - and I appreciate the frankness of my good friend and Chair of the Education Committee when he said it's to emphasize, I understand that, but why do we need the emphasis? Why is this particular subject so important at this point when what we really need to be focusing on is people who create jobs and sustain employment. So I continue to have misgivings about the bill but in terms of the curriculum content, and in terms of the need for it.

And finally, because we are trying like blazes to get our educational system in every town in every district across the state, both our suburbs
and above all, our cities. In absolutely tip-top form, we need to be the highest achievers. Education is so important in this state. Why are we continuing to come up with more ideas to expand the curriculum when we need to ensure that students are learning the curriculum we already have.

So I will not be supporting the bill today, Madam Speaker. But I hope that others will listen to the debate I would urge others to take this into very serious consideration because I don't think it's a good move for us at this time. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, Representative. Representative Ackert of the 8th.

REP. ACKERT (8th):

Thank you. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through you, a couple of questions to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your question, sir.

REP. ACKERT (8th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So on lines 14 and 15 I believe, as we talk about the inclusion of labor history, we had a discussion, I believe I
asked you in the Committee meeting, that I always consider - when we think about U.S. history, that everything that took place in our U.S. history should be able to be taught now. And I still struggle with why we can't teach this now. If you could, I guess, please again - if you could, answer that question. Why can this not be taught today? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. It can be taught today. This bill would ensure that every district had available to it the curricular support to teach it well. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8th):

And just to follow up. So you would probably see this being taught - and I don't believe there's actually a U.S. history classes right now. I did talk to a teacher recently, but through some type of class, you know, it would be taught, that we would think of as a history class, that this would
be taught through that class, correct? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Yes. History class would be a logical place where a teacher might avail themselves of this curriculum.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8th):

And that brings me to the next question. I'm just curious now, because it - and I did support this in Committee because I'm at a point where it's our history. But I do not like us just throwing in new curriculum in today's day and age with the struggles that we have with our current curriculum system. And the second half of line 15 and 16, it says, "including organized labor and the collective bargaining process." I do not believe that's a history class type of topic. Do you see that being taught in a different mode - a different class? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:
Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Not necessarily. The collective bargaining process is something that grew out of history of strikes, and sometime violent management/laborer confrontation that happened in the late 19th and early 20th century. So it could very easily be part of a history class as it could be part of a social studies class or other class. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And thank you to the good Chair for his answers. That's all I had for questions on this. I struggle at any time with new curriculum as we move forward. You can look at in the past, I think I voted against financial literacy curriculum being added, CPR being added, only because they fit existing structures of our classes now. They actually fit in everything that you could put in our existing classrooms, that I - that's what I believe, and I'm - could be, you know, be challenged on that.
And that's why I struggle with adding new components in here. You know, if it's a situation where it's textbooks, or other curriculum that's been approved by the district, then maybe they should approve different textbooks, or other different curriculum. So I struggle with this, I will listen to further dialogue. I do again thank the good Chair for his answers and look forward to listening to the further discussion. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, sir. Representative Candelora of the 86th.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this bill. I don't get even get to the content of the bill, but what gives me pause is the optics of this, for the state of Connecticut and what we're prioritizing. Over the past couple of years, we've seen the implementation of Common Core. I watched my own children in school struggling to get through that curriculum. The teachers are drafting it, there are a lot of errors in it, and families have to come together to
try to help our children succeed in their education. Maybe Common Core, when it completes, or when it’s established, might have some positive effects. But the fact that we’re turning the State Board of Ed’s eyes, or part of it off of Common Core, and asking them to develop a curriculum that is so specific, that takes resources away from what they actually should be doing, I think is very, very troubling to me.

We have yet to see all this curriculum being developed in our schools to help our children succeed, and it is dramatic. I’ve a 10-year old that used to love going to school, but has been somewhat apprehensive. Her esteem has been cut down because of all the testing. It’s fascinating when you look at it. All of this testing that these children are getting one out of ten correct, or two out of ten correct, and that may be okay based on the benchmarks. But when a child is looking at two out of ten, they’re looking at that as a failing grade. And so again, the fact that we’re taking up legislation like this I think is very misdirected. We should be focusing on what we implemented as a state because of a federal
mandate. Focusing on those areas, and not looking to cherry pick some area of curriculum because we’re deciding we want to make this kind of statement. And therefore I stand in opposition. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

    Thank you, Representative. Representative Harding of the 107th.

REP. HARDING (107th):

    Thank you, Madam Speaker. One question to the proponent, if I may. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

    Please prepare your question, sir.

REP. HARDING (107th):

    Thank you, Madam Speaker. The only question I have to the proponent, through you, Madam Speaker, is in regards to the statute and the encouraged curriculum. Is this encouraged curriculum within our state standardized testing? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

    Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

    Through you, Madam Speaker. No.
Representative Harding.

That answer suffices and I thank the Chairman and the proponent for his answers. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Representative Smith of the 108th.

Madam Speaker, thank you. And I do have a few questions for the proponent please.

Please prepare your question, sir.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The initial question I have is, in looking at the testimony at the public hearing, I wonder who's actually behind this bill, who's pushing this bill. Through you, Madam Speaker.

Representative Fleischmann.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. There were a variety of elected officials, and individuals who
were involved in various union efforts, and just individuals citizens who think this is a good idea who came forward in support.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

I thank the Chairman for his answer. One follow-up question on that. Was there anybody from the education sector who gave public testimony in favor of this bill? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. I would need to go through the details of the J.F. Report to answer that properly. We had an education specialist from the Connecticut Education Association who was in support, and I believe the State Department of Education had indicated that it would not be problematic for them to do this, but we didn't have anyone who was a proponent of the measure who specifically came out of the education sector, as one would normally define it. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:
And I find that curious, Madam Speaker. Because here we have a bill which we're telling our schools and districts that we're now going to require you to teach, labor history as part of our curriculum. But we're going to make sure that's being offered so you can teach labor history as part of the curriculum yet there was nobody from the state of Connecticut, no one from the public school, no one from the various public districts who teach our kids on a daily basis, who came forward and said, "You know what? This is a great idea. We really need to do this. We should do this."

In fact, Madam Speaker, what we have heard throughout the number of years that this type of bill has been floating around this Chamber is that the day is already filled with so much information that our students do not have the ability to learn what they're being taught. And our teachers do not have the time to teach what they're supposed to teach because we keep requiring and dictating to
them what they have to teach. And this adds one more component.

If I had the teachers and superintendents and those - the principals and those who are in the education field giving testimony saying, "You know what? This would be a good idea. We really think our students should know this. It's not being taught and it's something they need to have before they move on with their careers into college," I think I'd sit back and listen to that. Not being in the field, we like to hear from those who are. But those who are in the field did not come forward with that information. In fact, the testimony - the one testimony that I did see from an education sector was against the bill. Why is that? Well, the reason is clear. There is not enough time in the day to teach our students.

So this bill, as I indicated, or a similar bill has passed through this House on a number of years. Sometimes - it may even have made it out. It hasn't become law yet and I hope that it would not become law now. Because if we really wanted to talk about labor history I think there's a lot that we could learn, but that probably would be
something that you might want to learn at a higher level, because there's a lot involved with the labor history.

Many of our employees had to fight for their rights, there is no doubt. And the unions did serve a good purpose, but there are many other sinister sides to those who are pushing this bill. The threats, the intimidation, the violence that was alluded to by our Chairman, these are all part of factors that are included in labor history. How much time can we actually spend in the classroom at a lower age teaching these types of events?

I submit to you, Madam Speaker, that we really don't have the time during the school day to do that. It could be a fascinating course if you're in college or if you're so inclined to study labor history. I know the good Senator Looney comes to the Labor Committee pretty much every year backing the bill. And he gives us, on the labor Committee, a labor history. And I'm always fascinated by it and I wish there was more time to discuss it with him.

But to require our students, on a day-to-day basis to spend that amount of time when we're
failing in math, and we're failing in sciences, and we're getting behind in other areas, reading and writing, some of our core - and I hate to use the term "Core Curriculum" because I agree with my colleague that that's another fallacy. So if we really want our students to learn, we should teach them the basics.

Madam Speaker, I believe the Chairman indicated that the curriculum change that's being proposed here would be an option for the schools - that they would be encouraged to teach this but it's not a mandate. I just wanted to be clear for the Chamber. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. That is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

And has there been any conversation in the Education Committee to make this a mandate? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:
Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. No.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

And is there any reason, knowing what we know now, that the public hearing did not have anybody on behalf of the education sector advocating for this change. Is there any reason why this bill is being brought forward today without their support? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. You know, I think there is a response that I gave previously that I'd like to amend. Because my good colleague has just said that no one from the education sector came forward in support. I consider teachers to be part of our education sector. I consider those who represent teachers in the collective bargaining process to be part of the education sector. And the two largest teachers' unions in Connecticut
came forward strongly in support of this measure. They did so because they think it’s a valuable measure.

There are a lot of bills that come before the Education Committee every year. Some parties choose to focus on some measures, some on others. But in this case, we had both of the major teacher unions of Connecticut saying they thought this was a worthwhile measure, and I think it’s fair to say they are part of the education sector. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

I thank the Chairman for his response and I think the Chamber should be aware of the fact that if you take out the component of a union backer, or a union supporter, there was no testimony in favor of this bill that through the Education Committee. So this is a union-driven bill and I think we need to be clear about that. What the purpose, what the goal, what the reason is behind this bill. It’s not educational.
And I have a lot of teachers in my district. Some of my best friends are teachers. Not one of them came up to me and say, "Rich, you know what? This is a great idea. We need to teach our students labor history." Not one. And I represent four different towns.

So I think as long as the Chamber is clear what we're doing today, what we're attempting to do today, that's fine. But I encourage my colleagues to think about that, and when you press the button, that you realize that you're pressing the button for a union-driven bill, not an educational bill. Through you, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you. Representative Belsito of the 53rd.

REP. BELSITO (53rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to speak against this bill, as it stands. But there are some questions I would like to know about. I want to know if they're going to teach not only about how to work and labor, but are they going to talk about the bullying that goes on? The Communist party? The number of people who are
forced out of jobs? The coercion? There's so -
the intimidation? There are so many things that
are going to accompany this. I'm not sure there's
going to be enough time in the day to get all of
the facts in, even if they spend a whole semester
and they take at least one to two hours per day.

And I'd like to ask the proponent of the bill
a question, if I may. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your question, sir.

REP. BELSITO (53rd):

Okay. Who will be making the curriculum for
this - the classes that will be taught at the
schools?

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. The model
curriculum has been developed by the State
Department of Education, which would make districts
aware of it. And then local districts would have
the ability to take that off the shelf and make
adjustments to it if they saw fit. But the basic
model curriculum is developed at the State Department of Education. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Belsito.

REP. BELSITO (53rd):

Thank you. Also, Madam, I'd like to know just where they are going to expand the school day. Are we going to make the school day longer through this program? Because this is a whole new aspect of teaching history. Most students, if you've ever seen any of the news programs, cannot even tell you who the first president of the United States was. And now we're going to talk about labor unions, and what they've done for our country?

Not that I'm against unions. Unions were instrumental in developing our country. My grandparents, my parents, my uncles, my aunts, they all worked for unions. And I'm grateful that they were there because they played an important part in developing our country.

But to introduce this into the school curriculum where - if you know anything about schools coming from Europe, students from Europe. They go to school - their school day is longer.
Their school week is longer, and they have a very short summer vacation, somewhere in the vicinity of maybe three weeks. So we should be really talking about increasing our school day, our school year, and in the amount of time that we're spending in shortening our vacations. Here, we're gonna shorten the school day by introducing unions into the mix, and I just can't support this bill. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, Representative. Representative Mulligan of the 55th.

REP. MULLIGAN (55th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through you, just a couple of questions for the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your questions, ma'am.

REP. MULLIGAN (55th):

Thank you. On the bill, lines 8 and 9, it says, "The State Board of Education, within available appropriations and utilizes available resource materials, shall assist and encourage regional and local boards of education to include." It was my understanding that it was just going to
be available - materials available to the school systems if they so chose to include it in - or incorporate it in their curriculum. So "encourage local." That to me says that they're gonna go out and make it more of a requirement than just an availability. How is it that they'll "encourage?"

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

    Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

    Through you, Madam Speaker. As I mentioned in response to an earlier questions, my understanding of that verb as it's used in this entire section of statute, is that once the State Department of Education has prepared an area of curriculum, the Commissioner sends a circular out to districts letting them know, "Here is some free curriculum available to your teachers, in this case of history or social studies, that they may avail themselves of without cost." Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

    Representative Mulligan.

REP. MULLIGAN (55th):
Thank you. And through you, Madam Speaker, just one more question, if I may. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please proceed.

REP. MULLIGAN (55th):

Thank you. So just to be clear, this is not a mandate on the schools to provide this curriculum, it’s just - will have the materials if they so choose. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Yes, that is a very fair characterization.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Mulligan.

REP. MULLIGAN (55th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. That’s all - that’s all I have. Thank you for the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Vargas of the 6th.

REP. VARGAS (6th):
I don't want to - thank you, Madam Speaker. I don't want to prolong the discussion on this bill any longer than it has to go, but I just wanted to rise because, as a teacher for 35 years in the Hartford Public Schools, part of my assignment was to teach social studies, including American history, civics, and geography. And there has been a trend now to look at history in a different way, incorporate the Civil Rights Movement and the impact it had. Because traditionally, history has been taught from the point of view of the kings, the queens, presidents, captains of industry.

We hear about, you know, Henry Ford, David Rockefeller, the Vanderbilts. We hear about all these different people throughout history, and sometimes students would get the idea that history is driven simply be a few people in high leadership positions. But lately we've incorporated the impact of the women suffragists, the impact of the civil rights movements, so the people have a better idea of why President Lyndon B. Johnson would sign the Voting Rights Acts and the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965.
If students learn history in a vacuum, it's very difficult for them to really understand the dynamic that goes on. I think some of the concerns may be a little overstated, because my experience with the people that write curriculum and the people that write these history texts, tends to be that they deal with these issues in only general terms.

So most likely the issue we've been talking about in how time consuming they would be, and how they would detract from the Common Core, etc., etc. I don't think we need to worry about that because when they incorporate issues like Susan B. Anthony and the suffragettes, usually a couple of paragraphs to let these students know that these movements were taken place, that the actual vote by Congress, and later the whole Constitutional amendment that gave the women the right to vote, was something that came out of a social movement that took place at the grassroots level. Basically movements where many of our parents and our forefathers participated in, and so it gives a more holistic view of history. So that's all I would like to say about this.
My family comes from a working-class family and I know that it was a lot - the small contributions - my father was in the National Maritime Union, he was a Merchant Marine and before that he was in the U.S. Army. And, it was the little contributions of the people in these movements that led up to some of the major social changes that have happened in our country and have strengthened our democratic institutions. I just wanted to weigh in on that. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, sir. Representative Staneski of the 119th.

REP. STANESKI (119th):

Good afternoon, Madam Speaker. How are you?

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Good afternoon, ma’am.

REP. STANESKI (119th):

I have a few questions for the proponent of the bill, please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your questions.

REP. STANESKI (119th):
Yes, ma'am. Sir, first off, I know this is not a — I mean, not a mandate to our local Boards of Ed, but I was wondering is this going to available to our technical high schools, which are state schools. Through you, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Staneski.

REP. STANESKI (119th):

Madam Chair, through you. Also, does this preclude districts who do summer curriculum work who might want to develop their own curriculum and toolbox around these two subject matters? Thank you. Through you, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. No, I believe it does not.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Staneski.
REP. STANESKI (119th):

    Thank you, Madam Chair. And through you, so Mr. Chairman, I know we had a lot of discussion about this at the Committee level. And, if you could, could you walk me through - because I look at this as a tool in a toolbox, and not necessarily something that is curriculum that comes down. Could you walk me through what you might see this toolbox and how it would be utilized in a classroom. Through you, Madam Chair - I mean Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

    Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

    Through you, Madam Speaker. I should start by saying that the State Department of Education apparently has curriculum that it's already developed that I haven't seen. So my comments here are a bit speculative. But I would suspect that they have put together materials related to the Industrial Revolution and how that changed the conditions of capitalism and the workplace, and the manner in which both those whose created the companies that started to put out the steel, and
the various great machines built from steel, how those grew, and then how the workers who were engaged in that enterprise eventually started to organize so their work hours and work conditions could be more acceptable to them.

That information is in curriculum now that's sitting at the State Department of Education and a teacher of social studies, or a teacher of history who wanted to access it would only contact the State Department of Ed, it would come over to them and then they could go through the materials and use what they wanted to use to incorporate into their history class, or their social studies class. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Staneski.

REP. STANESKI (119th):

Thank you. Through you, Madam Speaker. So we have these tools that are sitting at the State Department of Education to enhance curriculum already in the school systems, maybe designed by the districts themselves, and these teachers are at liberty to use this in whatever fashion they see. Are there standards of learning that are attached
to these so - for example, "At the end of a civics lesson, the student will be able to dot dot dot." And the - and the teachers could possibly use these tools to reach that standard of learning. Are those available and attached to the toolbox? Thank you. Through you, Madam Chair - Madam Speaker, I’m sorry.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. I’m not sure. Typically when the State Department develops curricular information for districts, they will have good questions that can be asked to sort of provide a summative evaluation of how students have done, but I’m not sure what precisely what has been done in this case. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Simanski.

REP. SIMANSKI (62nd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know that one of the concerns here was, and it was a big concern of mine was putting extra work onto the State Department of Education to develop a curriculum
when 1) I know teachers and school districts work
on that through the summer and a lot of curriculum
and a lot of classes are driven by the need of the
students in the districts themselves, or just an
interest by an educator that says, "I'd like to
introduce this class as a seminar or a class, and
I'd like to do the research." The good Chairman
has answered my question that there is already a
toolbox in existence and all we're doing is just
offering that to our districts to use.

And as a teacher, I've - I applaud that
because when you are sitting in a classroom and you
are teaching a class, and especially this day and
age when you're fighting against social media and
the quick fix and kids wanting to be engaged and
stuff, to have extra tools that you can use as a
teacher in that toolbox and bring them to bring
debate to the classroom, to being two sides, and we
have respectfully added the capitalism piece to
this so, it really is a incumbent on the teacher to
engage those kids and use the right tools.

And for that matter and the fact that the
State Department of Education already has this
there, I just see it as a way of us - as a
district, I excuse me, I mean as a Chamber saying that this is another tool that we can use a teacher that they can use to enhance curriculum that they already have, to enhance a textbook, and uses a tool to help our young people understand the history as it was regarding labor unions and capitalism. So for that, I will be supporting this. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, ma'am. Representative Wood of the 141st.

REP. WOOD (141st):

Sure. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. And I do have a couple of questions for the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your questions, ma'am.

REP. WOOD (141st):

I remember studying this when I was in high school in Ohio in - I'm not going to name the year. And I know my kids have also studied it in public school down in Fairfield County. Can you tell me how this curriculum would be different from what's
already taught in schools? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Not having grown up in Ohio, not having attended an array of school districts across Connecticut, I cannot say offhand how the curriculum that’s at the State Department of Education may align with or be different from what’s already happening in schools. I think the bill is before us because there’s many schools that may skip over this topic entirely, which is something that this bill would make it easier for a teacher not to do by giving them a ready—a sort of a framework, a curriculum from the State Department of Education that they could use if they were not already covering this subject matter. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD (141st):

Thank you for that answer. And most of the textbooks that public schools use are nationally
approved textbooks and they all have labor history in them, and history on capitalism. So I'm not sure that's — I just think it's already taught across the state and across the district so I just wonder how it'll be different. I would like to see a copy of the curriculum. Is there a way I could do that? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I believe that if you were to contact the State Department of Education and express an interest in seeing this curricular packet that they've prepared they would share it with you, as is it public information. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD (141st):

Thank you. And did they share this curriculum — you said it's already been written, I understand that from previous questions that the curriculum has already been written. Was that shared with the Education Committee? Through you, Madam Speaker.
Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. At the time that the Education Committee considered this bill and held public hearings, I don't believe that the State Department had yet completed the curriculum so - I became aware of the curriculum's existence at the point when the fiscal note came out after the Education Committee's actions. So I haven't, myself, seen it yet. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD (141st):

All right, thank you very much. Thank you for the answers from the good representative and I - I'm not opposed to this bill. I'm not opposed to this idea. It is already taught in the schools. I mean certainly all the schools that I've been exposed to - public schools, it is taught. And it's taught well. And I think it is - we do need to understand the roots of our labor and the roots of the abuses that did happen at the turn of the century and at the start of the industrial age.
They were horrific. And shame on us that they existed at all. But they did, and we took care of it.

So that said, with everything we have to teach our kids now and the fact that this is already in most of the textbooks, if not all the textbooks that are used, I hesitate to vote in favor of this, although I do support the concept. I’ll just leave my comments at that. I do support the concept, but I’m probably not gonna vote yes on the bill. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, Representative. Representative Carter of the 2nd.

REP. CARTER (2nd):

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Just a few comments on the bill. A while back I was watching TV, and a news organization came on with their commercial. And they basically said, “We’ll not only tell you the news, but we’ll tell you what to think about it.” And I was really uncomfortable with that thought. I was saying, “Well, who are you to tell me what I should think about it?” What it is, is a news organization in this case, had a
chance to put things in context that they believed to be true. And I think that’s what concerns me a little bit about this bill, because it’s kind of the same deal.

You know, we allow our specialists in education to come up with curriculum for our kids and they spend their lives teaching, and whether its history or math or science, or whatever it is, they spend their lives doing this. So part of me is like, “Who are we in this room now to be forcing upon them this new curriculum or this idea that is clearly being pushed, I feel in a way that kind of politicizes our kids, in a way.” And I’m really uncomfortable with that, because while our good – one of the Representative earlier had mentioned, we do need to approach education from a different way and we need to make sure kids understand context.

I think we need to be very careful about how that context is put out there, that they understand both sides. And it’s not swayed one way or the other. I feel like this, the way this is being pushed through, at a time where we have a lot of this in curriculum already, is done in a way that’s going to be, you know, meant to sway them, or you
know, push them in a direction that’s gonna be one-sided. And I’m very uncomfortable with that. I don’t think the State Board of Education should be involved in creating this curriculum right now, when we need to take an honest look at history from all sides.

And, there are so many parts of history that are important to look at, and it is more than just the historical leaders, and it’s more than, you know, we mentioned Ford, and some of the industrial folks. There are important people in labor and I think that as we look at our history texts now they do discuss all that.

I think the way this is put forth - why, I understand people’s idea and what they wanna do. I don’t think I could support it. I do feel like it’s - we’re kind of politicizing this. So I’m not gonna support the bill. I understand where it comes from. I just don’t think it’s the right way to go. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, sir. Representative Ziobron of the 34th.

REP. ZIOBRON (34th):
Thank you, Madam Speaker. And good afternoon to you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Good afternoon, ma'am.

REP. ZIOBRON (34th):

Good afternoon. I'm rising today to just tell a quick story. You know, as many of us here, we don't get to spend a lot of time with our families. At this time of year we're missing a lot of events and baseball games and other things, so I try and make an effort because I'm missing a lot of those games with my son Brian, to talk about the day. And, "What did you do today?" and, "What did I do?" And a couple of weeks ago he said to me, "So what did you do today?" And we're talking about a bill that didn't end up coming for a vote here and I said, "Well, we have a lot of bills on the go list and then the agenda."

And he actually said to me, "Mom, what about not passing new laws? Why do all - why are you always to pass new laws? What about getting rid of some of the laws we already have?" My 16-year old son is a little smarter sometimes than I am and I
chuckled about that and said, "You're right. We should be getting rid of some of our laws."

In elementary school they had this book in the library with the most crazy laws in the United States, and it listed all the laws by states in alphabetical order, and you know, states had these crazy laws like you couldn't marry a moose in Alaska, and you know, all these things. And so he was talking to me about that.

Well, this bill is an example of laws - do we really need them? When I see in the fiscal analysis, that as of February 2015, the State Board of Education has already incorporated these things into law - so here's what I'm not gonna do today. I am not gonna go home and tell my son that I voted for a law that we already have. So today, I'm gonna fulfill my promise, and not support a law that we already have, and only for that reason am I gonna vote no. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, ma'am. Representative Srinivasan of the 31st.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):
Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Just a quick question for my own clarification. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please -

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. We already have seven optional resource material for local and regional boards of education. So today, if we were to pass this legislation, we would adding the 8th. Is there any difference in terms of how we treat the other seven and this one? Through you, Madam Speaker, to the good Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Each topic is treated differently in how the State Department researches and prepares the curriculum. But the
manner in which they are presented to the districts is the same. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I want to thank the Chair for his answer. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, sir. Representative Case of the 63rd.

REP. CASE (63rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Quick question, though to the proponent of the bill, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your question, sir.

REP. CASE (63rd):

Just a quick question. In many of these education bills, I'd just like to know, where do the semi-private quasi-three schools stand with this? Are they included in this, since our local students do go to those schools? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.
Through you, Madam Speaker. If I understood the question correctly, I believe that this curriculum that we’re talking about here would be made available to those academies in the same manner it’s made available to all public schools in Connecticut. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The three in doubt academies for the towns are considered private contractors. Through you, Madam Speaker. So that includes going to private contractors as was spoken to before on all school districts, including private schools? Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. The bill before us relates to curriculum that has been made available to public schools. The three academies to which my good colleague refers are kind of unique in that they operate as public schools, but
they have private endowments. So they kind of have their own status. But, it's my understanding that those academies do employ the same kind of curricular standards as all public schools across the state of Connecticut. So they can avail themselves of any of the optional curricular items listed in this section of statute.

That is an entirely different circumstance than that faced by a fully private school that receives no public funds, and that operates on the basis of its tuitions from families exclusively. So private and parochial schools are not covered by this area of statute. Public schools are and those three academies to which my colleague referred are, in this area of law, treated the same way as other public schools. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I thank the good Chairman for his answers. My concern is just that with the three endowed academies, as he well knows, they do have their own curriculum coordinators and I'm concerned on them being left
out on some things. But I think he's clarified and I think through legislative intent we can make this work. So thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, sir. Representative Ferraro of the 117th.

REP. FERRARO (117th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And, through you, I'd like to just ask a couple questions of the proponent of the bill please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your questions, sir.

REP. FERRARO (117th):

Thank you. The question has already been asked regarding the educational system's role in encouraging various school systems to incorporate this curriculum. And the answer's been rather short. I'd like just a little bit more elaboration with regards to what methods of "encouraging" the boards will use. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):
Through you, Madam Speaker. The response was brief because the mechanism is brief. The Commissioner of Education, to my understanding, sends out a circular to superintendents and boards of education letting them know about these various curricula that are available to them free of charge, and encourages them to utilize them if they believe it would be helpful, and what they're doing on their school districts. I think that's the entirety of the encouragement mechanism. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Ferraro.

REP. FERRARO (117th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And, through you, I appreciate the proponent of the bill's answer, but I have to ask this question as follow-up. To the - to his knowledge - to the proponent's knowledge, has the commissioner, or has the educational system ever used any other form of encouragement on other issues they would like to see included in the curriculum. Has it always been confined to this one memo? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:
Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. To my knowledge, a circular to the districts has been the main method of communication. It's possible that there are other approaches that the State Department may have taken but I would venture to say that since they are seven, and would be eight, subsections of the statute, whatever approach they took with one item, they would need to take with all since all these items are given equal emphasis by the Connecticut General Assembly. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Ferraro.

REP. FERRARO (117th):

Thank you, Madam Chair. And I thank the good gentleman for his comments, but my experience is that in the perfect world, you know, that might be the answer, and that might be the method involved, but when things take precedence and when there is an agenda or a particular narrative that needs to be pushed, I do think there are a number of ways to encourage certain things to be included, and
especially in a curriculum that I feel is going to influence young, impressionable students.

And you know, one of the words that I haven't heard today is "indoctrination" and I don't think there's anybody here that will deny that our educational system does indoctrinate our kids, depending on what the narrative is of the day. And quite frankly, as I look through the testimonies of all the people supporting, and the organizations supporting this bill, it does give me pause as to why this bill was supported by unions primarily, not by members of the educational system, and what is the narrative and agenda of those organizations?

And quite frankly I think that our children are far removed from the unions and what the union's agenda is. And because of that I - it gives me pause. And when I see things like we're going to teach things like labor laws and labor history and capitalism, and what have you, and I look around at the various programs and the types of things that are being taught in academia today, I don't even see the need for this particular legislation because they ready have - they're already doing this on some level. They're already
teaching their version of labor and community activism and what have you, and capitalism's been under attack.

And quite frankly, I don't see how this particular bill is gonna give a fair, balanced approach in teaching our children. And because of that, I can't support this bill. I don't see the reason for the bill in the first place. I think we're getting involved in area as a legislation that are unnecessary and I think out local educational boards can make up their minds how the curriculum is going to be presented. So I thank the good gentleman for his comments and, through you, Madam Chair, I appreciate the time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you, sir. Representative O'Neill of the 69th.

REP. O'NEILL (69th):

Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker. Just a couple of quick questions to the Chair of the Education Committee. Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please prepare your questions, sir.

REP. O'NEILL (69th):
Yes. I've listened to the debate, and I've looked at the bill, and I guess given that the - some of the biggest problems facing Connecticut in terms of education - one of the biggest ones is the achievement gap. Does this piece of legislation do anything, or is it intended to try to do anything to close the achievement gap? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. You know, in this state, we have a variety of standards for educational attainment, including how children perform in social studies, and how they perform in history. To be a top performer in social studies or history, one needs to have some understanding of how the economy functions, and the sort of countervailing forces of capital and labor.

So it is my personal opinion that yes, by ensuring that there is curriculum available to any teacher who wants to cover this area, good quality curriculum that gives a fair and balanced view of these issues, we do help students on the downside
of the achievement gap, here in Connecticut.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And the other -
what I see as major issues facing education in
Connecticut is the number of students showing up,
particularly in our community colleges, in need of
remedial education. And again, is this piece of
legislation going to alleviate that problem in
terms of reducing the number of students who will
require remedial education when they arrive at
college level, especially at the community college?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. It depends on the
sort of remediation that's being discussed. If the
remedial education relates to the areas of history
or the writing of essays, it does have the
potential to reduce the challenge. Through you,
Madam Speaker.
Representative O'Neill.

REP. O'NEILL (69th):

Well, I thank the Chair for his answers. I hadn't gotten the impression from the earlier discussions of this bill that that was the objective or the aim of it. I guess I've always thought the remedial educational issues tended to relate more specifically to things like the ability to read and write and do mathematics, and that in the area of the achievement gap, that those were the things that were generally measure by the national tests that are used to determine whether or not there is an achievement gap.

So I guess I'm a little surprised that this bill seen as a vehicle for accomplishing those goals. But I do appreciate the Chair's answers. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Thank you. Will you remark? Will you remark further on the bill that's before us? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Will members take your seat, and the machine will be opened.
CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber please. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber.

[pause]

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Have all the members voted? Please check the board to see that your vote is properly cast. And if all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 963, in concurrence with the Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number Voting</th>
<th>145</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Necessary for Passage</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those voting Yea</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those voting Nay 61
Those absent and not voting 6

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The bill passes. [gavel] Will the Clerk please call Calendar 507.

CLERK:

House Calendar 507, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on the environment.

Substitute Senate Bill 347, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PERCENTAGE OF STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS THAT MAY BE USED TO PURCHASE OPEN SPACE UNDER THE OPEN SPACE AND WATERSHED LAND ACQUISITION AGREEMENT.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon.

Madam Speaker, I move acceptance of the Committee’s Joint Favorable Report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The question the Chamber is on acceptance of the Joint Committee’s Favorable Report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

Representative Albis. You have the floor, sir.
On page 9, Calendar 219, substitute for Senate Bill No. 963, AN ACT CONCERNING THE LABOR AND FREE MARKET CAPITALISM CURRICULUM, Favorable Report of the Committee on Education.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, Senator Slossberg.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG:

Good afternoon, Madam President. So nice to see you today.

THE CHAIR:

Thanks. It's nice seeing you also, ma'am.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG:

Thank you. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion's on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, ma'am?

SENATOR SLOSSBERG:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. The bill before us requires the State Board of Education to make available curriculum materials to our local districts and our regional districts regarding Labor History and Law, including organized labor, the collective bargaining process, and existing legal protections in the workplace as well as the history and economics of free market capitalism and entrepreneurialism, and the role of labor and capitalism in developing the American and world economies. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Senator Boucher. Good afternoon, ma'am.
SENATOR BOUCHER:

Good afternoon, Madam President. Very nice to see you.

THE CHAIR:

And you.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

I know that this bill has been around for a couple of sessions. We’ve discussed it at length. There was some controversy because, originally, it was only a bill that dealt with the teaching of the labor movement in our historical references when we teach in high school. And I know that the issue of requiring the Department of Education to have resources available on many important movements in history have been debated off and on. And I have supported other movements to add The Holocaust as to one of the areas that our history classes should certainly teach. And the movement was not to mandate but to require; however, to mandate the Department of Education to provide those resources, to do the research, and have that available to school districts should they take advantage of it.

Though this bill does include also a provision to teach free markets - which was something that many of us on our side of the aisle also wanted to see have happen to have balance, to have parity - I’m still a little concerned (and why I probably did not vote in favor of the bill originally) because it does, again, require of the Department of Education to add more to their plate, do more work, provide information that may or may not be used by the school districts at a time, particularly at a time of when they now are burdened with great responsibilities - looking into a new curriculum and also new testing schemes, and also adding graduation requirements and rolling it out to our different school systems. So my concern is simply on the weight of the workload that is required of the Department of Education.

I would probably still have supported the certain things that are so impactful, like The Holocaust, to having that be a resource, but I don’t know if this
rises to the same degree. In fact, I do believe that both of these topics should be already, if not, are done routinely within our history classes in our state. So my concern is basically on adding more work at a time when I think our resources are minimal and require a great deal of focus on other topics. But I do very much appreciate how this bill has evolved, how it's added balance, and it's important - both topics are incredibly important of the growth of the labor movement throughout history, the growth of the free-market system as well, and how they oftentimes may be at odds but oftentimes work very well together to improve the working environment and the economy. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:


SENATOR FASANO:

Good afternoon, Madam President. Madam President, I'm gonna be voting no on this bill for the reasons I'm about to say. Madam President, we have an unemployment rate that is high. We have struggling school systems. We have education concerns in our community, and now we're adding a curriculum that, I may indicate, is probably not gonna be a curriculum that is gonna be a necessary element for our kids to get a job. Look, our kids need skill sets. We need to be concentrating on science, math, reading - that type of basic education. Hands-on education. Although this topic is a decent topic and although I respect the fact that it is well balanced, it should not be a priority that we're gonna mandate on our school system - even though there is some permissive language in here - to say this is something that you should be talking about. We should be concentrating on the real core curriculum that is necessary in this state for our kids to achieve highest success.

Our school systems in our cities, in our suburbs, particularly in our cities, need help. They need attention. They need help. Education is the great qualifier and equalizer among people. There is no other powerful tool than education. We shouldn’t be
talking about this issue. We should be talkin’ about the heart and soul of our inner city schools to give the basic, fundamental education that they need to succeed in life.

This is sending the wrong message. We need to refocus our priorities in this state. And I don’t wanna send the wrong message, and that’s why I’ll be voting no. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Senator Looney?

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, speaking in support of the bill, I believe this bill fundamentally addresses a very critical concern in what we need to be teaching students in our schools if they are, in fact, going to have a decent and comprehensive education. It will require the State Board of Ed, within available appropriations and using available resource materials, to assist and encourage development of a curriculum in labor history and law, including organized labor, the collective bargaining process, existing legal protections in the workplace, and the history and economics of free-market capitalism and entrepreneurialism and the role of labor and capitalism in developing the American and world economies.

What is more fundamental than that in terms of what is needed to educate our students in a way that prepares them to live in our society? I think that this is critically important for people to understand the history of this country and how it was formed. How can you educate people without that? In the words of the Czech writer Milan Kundera, "the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting." And we must teach our children to remember, and they cannot remember if they are not taught. And I think studies recently are starting to indicate that the absence of history and social studies in our school system, or the inadequacy of the way in which they are often taught, is one of the glaring problems of our K-12 system.
It's important for students to know about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and its importance for the New Deal and the passage of the National Labor Relations Act. It's important for them to know the significance of Eugene V. Debs and Samuel Gompers and John L. Lewis in American History. And the history of the Pullman Strike and the coal miners' strike and the Colorado Railroad strike during the early years of the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt. They need to understand about the trial of "Big Bill" Haywood and the Haymarket Riots. They also need to understand the significance of the revolutionary use of social science in the Brandeis Brief of Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis. And these are important, historical lessons that children need to be taught so that they understand the world around them in a better way.

And also, it's important to recognize that the portion of this bill that deals with the history of organized labor is that labor is so much more than job-site action and organizing it. Unions have pushed state and federal elected officials and judges to grant workers the rights to collective bargaining and have also improved conditions in terms of workplace safety and general benefits for communities at large. And what's happened in many ways, of course, is that the standards of humane workplace conditions that now benefit non-union workers as well as union workers in many ways are the result of the activism of those involved in organized labor.

It has been - organized labor was a crucial partner in the fight for mine safety laws and workers' comp laws and the passage of the OSHA Act, both federally and at the state level. Labor also was a strong advocate for the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Family and Medical Leave Act, among many others. And it's important to know that the children of Connecticut have to be informed that many of the things that they take for granted, in terms of rights, were not freely given by employers but had to be fought for by workers who showed great courage and made great sacrifice.

And on the other side, of course, it's important for them to learn economics, about the history of how
free-market capitalism operates and incentives for that, to pursue the American Dream.

So this is a balanced bill, and it incorporates something that is essential if we are really gonna say that we are educating students in our state. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, I'd ask the Clerk to please call for the first roll call vote of the day. The machine will be open.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call ordered in the Senate.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill No. 963

Total Number Voting 33
Necessary for Passage 17
Those voting Yea 24
Those voting Nay 9
Absent/not voting 3

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes. [gavel] At this time, I'd ask for a point of personal privilege. Has anybody - Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:
JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS

LABOR AND
PUBLIC
EMPLOYEES
PART 3
983 – 1273

2015
strategy to marginalize the significant of organized labor as part of a plan to accelerate the decline of union membership especially in the private sector.

Organized labor was a crucial partner in the fight for mind safety laws, workers compensation laws and the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970.

The labor also fought for the Pregnancy Discrimination Act in 1978, the Americans with Disability's Act of 1990 and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, among many others.

Currently organized labor is a key supporter of marriage equity. Without the contribution of organized labor the average worker, even the average non-union worker would have many fewer rights and benefits in employment and we owe it to the children of Connecticut to teach them this extraordinary contribution so that they can remember and win the battle of memory against forgetting.

Thank you for hearing this important legislation and wanted to say hello to Senator Winfield (inaudible) began my testimony.

So again thank you to this committee for all of the valuable work that you do year end and year out and again for raising this bill this year.

There is a related bill in the Education Committee that I testified on -- on yesterday that has the same content with the additional content of providing for the creation of a curriculum on free market capitalism and entrepreneurship. That I think is also appropriate although I think our entire system celebrates capitalism and free market
entrepreneurship in so many ways already, but if that were to be included, that would also be I think unobjectionable if it created more of a consensus on this bill.

Thank you.

REP. TERCYAK: Thank you very much, Senator.

Do we have any questions?

Yes.

SENATOR WINFIELD: I don't actually have a question. I just wanted to thank you for coming to testify on a bill. I think it's a pretty important bill as well.

We did a bill last year that got out of the Senate relatively little discussion compared to some other bills that we've had.

And I missed you yesterday so I was glad to get back here before you were finished. But thank you again because I think it's important that - - that everybody understands the history of - of the movement.

Thank you.

SENATOR LOONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Senator.

So -- so the comments, as I understand them, include a willingness to add free market capitalism to the language if it's not already in there.

REP. MINER: And -- and the question that I have just -- you know I'm looking at the language here -- it -- it says within available
appropriations. I always take that to mean no fiscal note. So the understanding I -- I suspect that I would have is that if the State Board of Education deems that they have the ability to create materials and curriculum then that's what will occur, but we're not, we're not advocating that this somehow be prioritized above any of the other initiatives that are already in statute. A Native American history, holocaust, genocide education awareness and so on.

SENATOR LOONEY: No it would add to that list, not replace items on that list. And again it would -- the curriculum would then be available to -- to school districts who wanted to incorporate it into their American History classes or -- or in some other ways. So it would not be in replacement of but would give them an additional option which I think should be, should be encouraged because I think in many ways, these issues that we're talking about here are really mainstream issues in American history that how can you really talk about the history of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries without -- without talking about these monumental struggles between -- between trusts and labor, the role of President Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt in -- in taking on the large trust in the northern securities case and the -- the other major things that went on during his, during his administration.

The effort to implement and make operative the provisions of the Sherman Antitrust Act that was passed in 1890 but really did not become an operative principle until about 15 years later when -- when President Roosevelt was energized to try to make it work and give it teeth.

These are all critical aspects of the American
SENATOR OSTEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and thank you very much for showing us how important history is in all the decisions that we make, Senator Looney.

I would like to talk to two points of your testimony and part of it is historical in basis. The great Martin Luther King was not only a great civil rights leader, he was a -- a great leader for organized labor and said that many times over that a good paying job was the best equalizer for working men and women and he fought every day not just for civil rights but for the social justice of a good paying job and -- and I think that that's often forgotten in history when we talk just about the civil rights very important piece of his history. But he also carried a crucial role in promoting organized labor many times.

And I would venture to say that part of your testimony talks about non -- non-organized labor and the rights that they have achieved as a result of the fights that organized labor has had.

And I would point to today's world and say that I do not believe that Walmart would be talking about raising their rates, their hourly rates to $15.00 an hour had it not been for the work of the organized labor who has gone from Wal-Mart site to Wal-Mart site, to petition in front of them, to show people what happens in the private sector when organized labor is barred from organizing workers.

And I think that your testimony today shows what happens when there's a decline in organized labor.
When organized labor was at a much higher percentage of the private sector workers, it is the -- the -- there -- there was parody between the -- the top of a company and the regular worker. Since we have disbanded organized labor we have essentially allowed the chief executive officers salaries to sometimes go to 400 times the regular worker and I think your history would -- your history lesson to us today points out that without the real knowledge of what men and women fought for all those years, has led us to a decline in the middle class, is a direct reflection of the decline in organized labor and the private sector.

I want to thank you very much for bringing it up again.

REP. TERCYAK: Thank you very much.

Representative Kiner.

REP. KINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Senator for your testimony.

Just a comment then a quick question for you. First of all thank you for testifying today. I am a strong supporter of this bill I introduced one or two years ago and I think we've heard it every year since. I'm hoping this is the year that we do get it passed and I'm glad to hear that the Education Committee is also raising this bill.

Just sitting here listening to you, I'm fascinated. I love history and I can only imagine how fascinated the students are going to be once the teacher gets the more detail about everything that you mentioned.
RAFEED HUSSAIN: Absolutely.

REP. MCCARTY: -- that you mentioned in your environmental science program --

RAFEED HUSSAIN: Right.

REP. MCCARTY: -- so that it's a true asset and I thank you very much for your testimony today.

RAFEED HUSSAIN: Thank you. Appreciate it.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you again.

RAFEED HUSSAIN: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Go swim on your way. I believe we've got a couple of people who have left the room, so I think Commissioner Myra Jones-Taylor is up next to be followed by David Herberger, to be followed by Superintendent Dr. James Thompson.

Commissioner, I'm wondering if you might do us a small favor. So President Pro Tem of the Senate, Marty Looney has been sort of circling the airport with text going back and forth as to when he might fit in and he arrived just as the student left and I hadn't spotted him. Would you mind if we brought him up and then went to the order I just discussed.

COMMISSIONER MYRA JONES-TAYLOR: I would be happy to defer to my Senator.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: You showed fine understanding of political process. Senator Looney, welcome.

SENATOR LOONEY: Thank you. Good afternoon, Senator Slossberg and Representative Fleischmann and distinguished members of the Education
Committee. I'm Martin Looney, State Senator from the 11th District representing New Haven, Hamden and North Haven and I'm here to testify in support of Senate Bill 963 AN ACT CONCERNING A LABOR AND FREE MARKET CAPITALISM CURRICULUM.

In the words of the Czech writer Milan Kundera, quote, the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting and we must teach our children to remember.

Now, they cannot remember if they are not taught. Do students know the story of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and its importance to the New Deal and the passage of the National Labor Relations Act? Do they know what the Wobblies stood for in our labor history? Do they know who the Molly McGuires were?

Do they appreciate the historical significance of Eugene V. Debs, Samuel Gompers and John L. Lewis? And have they learned the history of the Pullman strike, the coalminers' strike and the Colorado railroad strike during the early years of the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt?

Have they read about the murder trials of Big Bill Haywood and Joe Hill? Do they understand that without labor unions there would be no leisure on weekends, or many measures to protect workplace safety?

Do they realize the inhuman and degrading conditions that the workers of the United States endured before labor successfully organized? And have they learned of the revolutionary use of social science in the so-called Brandeis Brief for which Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis became famous and the anniversary of that 1908 case was this week on Tuesday, February 24th.
I fear they have not. These are but a few of the important historical lessons our children should be taught about the labor movement and the enlightened progress that has championed and helped to realize, not only for union members, but for the general benefit of society, and it seems to me that the inclusion also of the free market capitalism portion of the bill is certainly inoffensive but may be unnecessary since the benefits of capitalism and entrepreneurial success is celebrated in our society in a variety of ways.

But history of organized labor is so much more than job site action and organizing. Unions push state and federal elected officials and judges to grant workers the right to collective bargaining.

This struggle taught individual workers that they could achieve success with dignity only if they assert their collective power. This right is now being challenged. Students should know what is at stake in this challenge.

For some, opposition to the teaching of labor history is part of a strategy to marginalize the significance of organized labor as part of a plan to accelerate the decline of union membership, especially in the private sector.

Organized labor was a crucial partner in the fight for mine safety laws, worker compensation laws, which passed at the state level before they were passed at the federal level and the passage of the Occupational and Safety Health Act of 1970.

Labor fought for the pregnancy discrimination act of 1978, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, The Family and Medical Leave Act
of 1993 among many other pieces of progressive legislation.

Currently, organized labor is the key supporter of marriage equity. Without the contribution of organized labor, the average worker, even the average non-union worker would have many fewer rights and benefits in employment.

We owe it to the children of Connecticut to teach them of these extraordinary contributions so that they can remember and win the battle of memory against forgetting. Thank you very much for hearing this important legislation this year.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Senator, for your advocacy, for your eloquence. In my years at this Committee, I don't believe I've ever had the pleasure of hearing someone quote Milan Kundera, but you clearly understand the value of the struggle of memory against forgetting and your litany of the achievements of those who have been advocating on behalf of workers is really a wonderful reminder to everyone.

I also want to thank you for your openess to a bill that to me strikes a compromise that people had sought where labor history is there and so, too, a discussion of free market capitalism so people don't feel that in some way we're not being even-handed.

SENATOR LOONEY: Right.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: It's very thoughtful of you to come forward with an approach that hopefully will be met well by all. Certainly it is by me. Thank you, and I know my Co-Chair has some remarks as well.

SENATOR LOONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
SENATOR SLOSSBERG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I just want to say thank you to Senator Looney for bringing this forward and for being here before this Committee, as well as for your leadership and great advocacy in this end, in so many other areas.

And for the people in this building who know Senator Looney well know that he is an incomparable, incredible, vast knowledge of history in all sorts of areas and provides us with guidance on a regular basis for the history of this building, the history of sports, the history of politics, the history of politics in Connecticut. So many other things.

The history of the labor movement and so many different things and it really is an incredible honor to be able to serve under your leadership as well, and I share your feelings that we need to know where we've been to know where we are going and to have a clear guide to make sure that we don't make the mistakes of the past and we carry forward what has served us so well here today. So I thank you, Senator Looney, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, Senator Looney. It's good to see you and thank you for your very eloquent testimony. It's always a pleasure to listen to you deliver these things and I agree with our Chairs that it's very, it's very agreeable and very, I think well received that you've been open on the question of subject matter and I know that's what we've most often debated in this House, so I'm not even going to dwell on
that because that's not really, that's not my question.

I have another question for you, which I think is of more general concern that I would ask, regardless of the subject matter of the course.

And I just was wondering about your feelings on this issue. At the moment, there is a lot of discussion about the difficulty of simultaneously dealing with the curriculum reforms of the 2010 Education Reform Bill and also trying to integrate all of the things that we've decided to do since, such as the adoption of the Common Core and various evaluation and assessment protocols and all sorts of new curriculum, and there's even, there are a lot of questions about whether those two sets of reforms don't, in fact, collide with each other.

And a lot of the, a lot of high schools are having trouble dealing with all of that very expeditiously. It takes kind of time to introduce it all.

So my question to you is, do you think this is the best timing to introduce a new course to the curriculum, or that perhaps we ought to give a little bit of breathing room to our school system?

SENATOR LOONEY: Representative, I think it's absolutely the best time. In fact, it's several years overdue from the time this bill was first introduced and I think that the labor history curriculum could be worked into the history curriculum since history is part of the curriculum. American history is taught in public high schools in the state, and there is no reason why what we're talking about in this bill could not be part of the component of what
is regularly taught as part of American history in our schools without having it be seen as adding any kind of burdensome additional requirements.

Clearly there is concern about the mandates in terms of time, test preparation, all of that, but it seems to me that we have creative curriculum developers and that should not be an insurmountable challenge.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you.

SENATOR LOONEY: Thank you.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you very much.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you both. Let me just say, I know that Senator Looney has demands back in his district, so if folks would be brief.

I also want to make sure people are aware that this bill proposes the curriculum that the Senator has spoken about to be in the non-mandatory area of statute where the State Department of Education makes it available and districts avail themselves of it if they wish, but it is not a mandate. Representative McCarty.

REP. MCCARTY: I can withdraw my question because you just answered it for me. Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Any other? Representative Ackert, briefly, please, sir.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, and I guess my struggles with curriculum in (inaudible) we teach American history. Senator, why aren't we including these in our programs now? And that's a struggle. It's American history. That's part of American history along with the
entrepreneurs' component of it. Is it just that we're buying different lesson books that don't include them, sir?

SENATOR LOONEY: That may very well be. I think that's an excellent question, Representative, because this is such a, as far as I'm concerned, such a mainstream issue in American history that it really should be addressed if we're going to teach American history in a way that really reflects the accuracy of what happened in this country as it developed into a major industrial power from the end of the Civil War until the middle of the 20th century.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, sir. Thank you for your advocacy and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR LOONEY: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. Any other questions? If not, thank you, Senator. Godspeed and we will call up now ==

SENATOR LOONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and again, congratulations to this Committee on the superb and thoughtful work that this Committee does year in and year out. Thank you very much.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, sir. David Herberger is up next and as he approaches, oh, well, we're supposed to alternate between public officials, so if David Herberger is here, he is up next.

And while he approaches, I just wanted folks to be aware, apropro to Representative Ackert's question that to some degree the material in Connecticut textbooks for history, for English and so forth is governed by the Texas School board, which is one of the largest purchasers of school textbooks in the United States of
America, and so the decisions they make affect us, which is why for instance, there is far less labor history in U.S. history books now than there was 25 years ago.

In Texas, they don't like that, and so it doesn't make it into a lot of the books, so that's a short answer and we can talk further about the textbook business down the road.

A VOICE: And that's why we learned about the Alamo.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Yes, the Alamo is always in there, and Sam Houston. Mr. Herberger, the floor is yours.

DAVID HERBERGER: Good afternoon. My name is David Herberger. I live in New Fairfield with my family. My two children, Molly and Alex attend the New Fairfield public school system. I thank you for this opportunity to ask you formally to withdraw the proposed change to Section 16 of Bill 942.

Both my children and my family and their friends, neighbors, classmates, have benefited extensively from the academically rich array of Inter-District Cooperative Grant Funded Programs.

These Inter-District Grant Programs are free of charge. They're open to all students of all academic abilities. This provides an invaluable opportunity for all students, not just the best and the brightest and not just those who can afford them.

As a parent, I appreciate this immensely. Both my kids thrive and grow through their participation in these programs. Academically, yes, but more importantly for them, they grow developmentally by spending quality
instructional time with diverse children from the surrounding towns.

In New Fairfield, students are mostly Caucasian, mostly white. At the Inter-District Grant Program we have a very diverse group of kids from African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and all kinds of different mixes and this adds to their diversity.

The opportunity for my children to learn within this multi-cultural context cannot be replicated. It would be impossible for any one of us, any parent, any teacher, any organization to create and sustain such a high quality academically rich learning experience where diversity and decreasing racial, ethnic and economic isolation is number one on the list of priorities.

I'm sure some of you are aware with decades old research, proving the benefits of learning with a multi-cultural community. In fact, just in last week's paper there was a synopsis of a latest study showing that the youngest of age, even the most incidental exposures to diversity helps individuals feel comfortable and confident living in a diverse global world.

The Inter-District Grant Programs give my Children this critically important exposure to diversity and by the way, the exposure at the program is not incidental. It's intentional, purposeful and thoughtful. It creates lasting, meaningful change.

Why make this proven successful initiative taken away? It doesn't make any sense. Our children need this educational opportunity.

I'd also like to mention that I am a teacher in the New Fairfield public school system. Over
TODD BERCH: Good evening, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and the Education Committee.

My name is Todd Berch. I'm here on behalf of Lori Pelletier, the Executive Secretary/Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO. There are 900 affiliated local unions and 200,000 union members from all 169 towns and cities in Connecticut in support, and we thank the committee for raising Senate Bill 963. We'd also like to thank Senator Looney for his testimony earlier today in support of this as well.

So the full content of subject matter is not addressed in this proposed legislation. We fully support this bill as a starting point enabling students an opportunity to be informed about the structure of workforce -- workplace processes and the roles workers have and have -- and continue to have in creating history.

Most historical events have currently been taught without the emphasis on how these events transpired or even preface relative to labor. By including labor history in high school curriculum we would finally be able to honor the men, women, and at one time, children who toiled to create the middle class and make this country great.

The State of Connecticut grants the right of an education to all children. The student is afforded every opportunity to pursue their interest in any occupation or field. When a student completes their education, they transition from student to worker. Where the educational process needs to be enhanced is through additional subject matter that is being
discussed today.

I wish to state that throughout history, the unions of the Connecticut AFL-CIO have stood up and given a voice to workers whether they're in a union or not. The mission statement of the AFL-CIO is to improve the lives of working families to bring economic justice to the workplace and social justice to our nation.

That being said, labor history is a curriculum enhancement, encompasses the education of work rules, benefits, and safety laws that we currently abide by and enjoy as a direct reflection of our past history. Regardless of what side of labor you may be on, passing this legislation affords the opportunity for a student that is transitioning into the workforce an overview in order for them to make an adequately informed decision about their labor opportunities that are available to them.

We appreciate the committee holding this public hearing and we're available for questions.

Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

Are there questions for the witness?

Oh, what good timing you have.

Any questions?

If not, thank you very much for your time and testimony, advocacy, and patience.

TODD BERCH: Appreciate it.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Steve McKeever of AFT-Connecticut.
Your long, patient wait is over.

STEPHEN McKEEVER: I'll try to be brief. My boss, Sharon Palmer, wants to get home and I drove, so.

Well, it's getting up on the nighttime so good evening, everyone, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann.

I'm here to speak on two -- two bills. One is 963, the labor and free market and capitalism and curriculum. Although, Todd just said it very well and so did Senator Looney, so I'm not going to repeat there. But I just want to talk on something that had come up earlier, somebody had asked and I apologize but I can't -- I didn't right the name down.

But is this the right time for social studies to be looking at curriculum because we had Common Core changes and -- and all these other things. And I believe this is the perfect time. I taught in Middletown High School for 17 years, worked very closely with the -- as a union rep, with the social studies department because they were going through a lot of changes and it's a philosophical discussion as to what should be taught and what's not being taught. And this is the perfect time to do. They're all having conversations. We're in the 21st Century, they have to start talking about what's -- what's important to us now. So this is the time to do that.

The other bill I wanted to talk about, H.B. 630 -- 6836, criminal history records for school employees. The background check is being decreased according to the bill from 30 days down to five days and I just have a concern here that that might be a little short.
SB 943 AN ACT CONCERNING CHARTER SCHOOL MODERNIZATION AND REFORM

SB 944 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN REQUIREMENT

SB 963 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

SB 962 AN ACT CONCERNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

SB 962 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Testimony submitted to the Education Committee February 25, 2015

SB 943 AN ACT CONCERNING CHARTER SCHOOL MODERNIZATION AND REFORM

CABE supports the provisions of SB 943, An Act Concerning Charter School Modernization and Reform, which require a plan to share student learning practices and experiences with the local and regional board of education. The sharing of experiences was part of the original impetus for the creation of charter schools in Connecticut, and CABE is happy to serve as a vehicle to help disseminate this information statewide. We also support proposals to create transparency in the monitoring of student academic achievement and charter school budgets.

SB 944 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN REQUIREMENT

In order to implement this requirement effective July 1, 2017, there will be a need for resources targeted to those districts who have not yet been able to move to full-day kindergarten.

HB 6834 AN ACT CONCERNING COLLABORATION BETWEEN BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

HB 6835 AN ACT CONCERNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

HB 6837 AN ACT ENCOURAGING A GRADUATED RESPONSE MODEL FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE

HB 6835 AN ACT CONCERNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

HB 6837 AN ACT ENCOURAGING A GRADUATED RESPONSE MODEL FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE

CABE encourages boards of education to enter into memoranda of understanding with law enforcement agencies when they are used as school resource officers. This is a critical component in establishing a productive and effective working relationship between the school, the SRO and the local police department. We also provide model policies to districts concerning a graduated response for student discipline.

SB 963 AN ACT CONCERNING LABOR AND FREE MARKET CAPITALISM CURRICULUM

Given the multiple other priorities at the State Department of Education, it seems unnecessary to impose another specific subject area in the curriculum resources that they are to develop and make available to school districts.

HB 6835 AN ACT CONCERNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

CABE is concerned about the cost increase to districts to provide a program of bilingual education where there are as few as 6 students who are non-English speakers. In addition, the extension of a bilingual education program from the 30 months to 60 months carries an additional price tag, and may in fact not be in the best interest of all students.

SB 962 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

As drafted, this bill not only requires that the program of instruction include computer programming, the safety of social media, investigative detention and arrest, and CPR, but also extends the requirement for world languages beginning in grade 6. This bill would clearly impose an additional cost burden on school districts. In addition, additional specific curriculum requirements are in direct competition with a move to a more personalized learning experience for all our students. We urge you to reject this bill.
Testimony of the Connecticut AFL-CIO before the Education Committee

February 25th, 2015

Good Afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee.

We are here today to testify on behalf of the 900 affiliated local unions that represent over 200,000 union members from all 169 cities and towns of Connecticut in support of:

Raised S.B. No. 963 - An Act Concerning A Labor and Free Market Capitalism Curriculum

Though the full content of subject matter is not addressed in the proposed legislation, we fully support this bill as a starting point enabling students an opportunity to be informed about the structure of workforce/workplace processes and the roles workers have had and continue to have in creating history. Most historical events are currently being taught without the emphasis of how these events transpired or even prefaced relative to labor. By including labor history in high school curriculum we would finally be able to honor the men, women, and at one time children who toiled to create a middle class and make this country great.

The State of Connecticut grants the right of an education to all children. The student is afforded every opportunity to pursue their interest in any occupation or field. When a student completes their education they transition to worker. Where the educational process needs to be enhanced is through additional subject matter such that is being discussed today. I wish to state throughout our history, the unions of the CT AFL-CIO have stood up and given voice to workers whether they are in a union or not. The mission statement of the AFL-CIO is to improve the lives of working families, to bring economic justice to the workplace, and social justice to our nation. That being said labor history as a curriculum enhancement encompasses an education of work rules, benefits, and safety laws that we all currently abide by and enjoy as a direct reflection of our past history. Regardless of what side of labor issues you may take, passing this legislation affords the opportunity for a student that is transitioning into the workforce an overview in order for them to make an adequately informed decision about the labor opportunities that are available to them.

We appreciate the committee holding this public hearing.

Lori Pelletier – Executive Secretary Treasurer, Connecticut AFL-CIO
Good afternoon Sen. Slossberg, Rep. Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. I am here to testify in support of SB 963 AN ACT CONCERNING A LABOR AND FREE MARKET CAPITALISM CURRICULUM.

In the words of the Czech writer Milan Kundera, “The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting”. We must teach our children to remember. They cannot remember if they are not taught. Do students know the story of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire and its importance for The New Deal and the passage of the National Labor Relations Act? Do they know what the” Wobblies” stood for? Do they know who the “Molly McGuires” were? Do they appreciate the historical significance of Eugene V. Debs, Samuel Gompers, and John L. Lewis? Have they learned the history of the Pullman strike, the coal miners’ strike and the Colorado railroad strike during the early years of the Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt? Have they read about the murder trials of “Big Bill” Haywood and Joe Hill? Do they understand that without labor unions there would be no leisure on weekends? Do they realize the inhuman and degrading conditions that the workers of the United States endured before labor successfully organized? Have they learned of the revolutionary use of social
science in the "Brandeis Brief" (or that the anniversary of this 1908 case was this week -Tuesday February 24)? I fear they have not. These are but a few of the important historical lessons our children should be taught about the labor movement and the enlightened progress it has championed and helped to realize not only for union members but for the general benefit of society. It seems to me that the inclusion of free market capitalism is unnecessary but harmless; it would appear that history is taught to all in the current curriculum.

The history of organized labor is so much more than job-site action and organizing. Unions pushed state and federal elected officials and judges to grant workers the right to collective bargaining. This struggle taught individual workers that they can achieve success with dignity if they assert their collective power. This right is now being challenged. Students should know what is at stake in this challenge. For some, opposition to the teaching of labor history is part of a strategy to marginalize the significance of organized labor as part of a plan to accelerate the decline of union membership especially in the private sector.

Organized Labor was a crucial partner in the fight for mine safety laws, workers' compensation laws, and the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. Labor fought for the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 among many others. Currently, organized labor is a key supporter of marriage equity. Without the contribution of organized labor, the average worker, even the average non-union worker, would have many fewer rights and benefits in employment. We owe it to the Children of Connecticut to teach them of these extraordinary contributions so that they can remember and win the battle of memory against forgetting.

Thank you for hearing this important legislation.
Good afternoon, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Stephen McKeever. I am the First Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of more than 90 local unions representing nearly 30,000 public and private sector employees. Our members include more than 15,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses, and other school personnel across the state. It is on their behalf that I appear before you to testify on two bills.

**SB 963 An Act Concerning a Labor and Free Market Capitalism Curriculum**

I am here today to speak in support of SB 963, An Act Concerning a Labor and Free Market Capitalism Curriculum. The labor movement has played a crucial role in the development and improvement of American society and economy. The labor movement has been instrumental in developing the middle class. It has advocated for fair working wages and pensions to allow people to retire with dignity. It brought us the forty-hour work week, workplace safety, and grievance procedures, just to name a few. These did not come without cost; people risked their jobs, jail time, and sometimes their lives to bring about change. We teach our children how our society progressed from an agricultural society to an industrial society, but too often textbooks focus on industry and its role in the economy while limiting discussion of the working people who struggled to bring about the middle class. SB 963 requires that labor history and the struggles of organized labor be taught with equal emphasis on free market capitalism and entrepreneurialism.

**HB 6836 An Act Concerning the Timing of Criminal History Records for School Employees**

This bill reduces the time required for reporting a background check from thirty days to five days. I am concerned that this is not enough time to do a thorough background check, leading to an inaccuracy in data reported. I am concerned that some instances
Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Ray Rossomando, Research and Policy Development Specialist for the Connecticut Education Association. CEA represents 43,000 active and retired teachers across the state. I am testifying today on SB942, Governor Malloy's budget implementer proposals affecting education, as well as four other bills noted below.

**SB 942** AA Implementing The Budget Recommendations Of The Governor Concerning Education

SB942 eliminates many important programs and services that help students most affected by achievement gaps to catch up to their peers. Consequently, CEA does not support SB942.

CEA recognizes that since 2010, and in the wake of significant recessionary challenges, Governor Malloy's budgeting commitment to education was laudable. The governor increased funding to education through the Education Cost Sharing grant and targeted resources to early childhood education as a stepping stone to success. However, the commitments to these critical grants, as well as to the many others that make a real difference in the lives of children, must be maintained.
SB 962 AAC The Middle School Curriculum and SB 963 AAC A Labor and Free Market Capitalism Curriculum

CEA supports SB962, which requires the State Board of Education to develop model curriculums on the safe use of social media, investigative detention and arrest, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

CEA also supports SB963, which requires the State Board of Education to develop a model curriculum on the history of labor and capitalism in the development of the American and world economies.

Producing a model curriculum will help teachers better address critical economic issues, such as income inequality, legal protections in the workplace, entrepreneurialism, and job creation, that are always vital topics in civic discourse.

HB 6837 AA Encouraging A Graduated Response Model For Student Discipline and HB 6834 AAC Collaboration Between Boards Of Education And School Resource Officers

CEA supports the governor's bill, HB6837, as well as the very similar language in HB6834. Each bill would help define the roles of School Resource Officers to ensure optimal collaboration between SROs and the students and staff in schools. Additionally, reports on suspensions, expulsions, and arrests in schools will help to identify and correct any disparities or excessive use of these punitive actions.

HB 6836 AAC The Timing Of Criminal History Records Checks For School Employees

CEA Supports HB6836, which would require faster background checks of new school employees. HB6836 reduces the deadline for school 44 employers to conduct background checks from 30 days to within 5 days of hire, ensuring greater safety, assurances, and peace of mind for everyone in the school community.

Thank you.

Please see the Community Schools attachment
Teaching Labor History in the Connecticut Public Schools

By Steve Kass
Greater New Haven Labor History Association
Vice-President of the Executive Board Member
Retired Teacher – New Haven Public Schools – 35 years

Testimony for the Labor Committee of the Connecticut State Legislature
February 26, 2015

“The history of the American labor movement needs to be taught in every school in this land....America is a living testimonial to what free men and women organized into free democratic trade unions can do to make a better life....we ought to be proud of it.”

Hubert H. Humphrey, Former Vice President

According to a poll by the independent Hart research, 54 percent of adults said they know just a little or don’t know much about unions. They said their chief sources of knowledge were personal experience (37 percent), people in unions (26 percent) and the media (25 percent). Significantly, learning in school was not even mentioned.

The implications of the research are clear. To a very large degree, Americans are uninformed or misinformed about union, the labor movement and the role that workers have played, and do play, in our nation’s economic, political and cultural life.

For these reasons the Greater New Haven Labor History Association (GNHLHA) is proposing legislation requiring the teaching of labor history in Connecticut public schools. The legislation specifically calls for “the teaching of organized labor, the collective bargaining process, and existing legal protections in the workplace in Connecticut public school classrooms.” The purpose of the legislation is to get labor’s untold story told.

This legislative proposal follows the lead of the Wisconsin labor history association that organized the first in the nation passing of historic legislation in 2009. Similar legislation is being presented in other states across the country.
Unfortunately, apathy and indifference are at the center of young people's lack of understanding the role of unions and labor history. Students have simply been taught little or no labor history. Because of this fact, generations of workers don't have a basic understanding about the historical role that unions played in helping to create the middle class. They don't know that it was unions that helped give American society the weekend, minimum wages, health care benefits, social security, Medicare, 40-hour work week and unemployment insurance.

Most people don't remember or know how important the labor movement was in pushing Depression-era politicians to pass legislation that systematizes the basic features of American work wage earners now take for granted.

How Labor's story is distorted in high school history textbooks
In a new report commissioned by the Al Shankar Institute called “Labor’s Story Left Out of High School History Textbooks,” (the report) finds that most Americans never get the information they need to create informed opinions on questions about labor's role in American society. The report surveyed four major textbooks that together account for most of the market in U.S. history textbooks' in this country and called the coverage of the labor movement - spotty, inadequate, and slanted. The textbooks present labor history in a biased, negative way; for example, focusing on strikes and strike violence while neglecting labor's role in bringing generation of Americans into the middle class. At other times, the textbooks simply ignore labor's contributions - including unions’ activism in passing social reforms such as the eight-hour workday, and their strong support for the civil rights movement.

AFT president Randi Weingarten said, "This report explains why so few Americans know much about labor's history and contributions. It paints a devastating picture of distortion and omission."

The report notes that the problem of negative or incomplete coverage of the labor movement in school textbooks dates back at least to the New Deal era, and scholars began documenting this biased treatment beginning in the 1960's. It concludes that U.S. history texts have essentially -- taken sides in the intense political debate around unions -- the anti-union side.

The report was motivated by the belief that students need a straightforward story about labor based on much more than what the media can provide.
Students deserve unbiased knowledge and understanding that will help them form their own critical judgments.

In the face of such depressing news, the GNHLHA hopes to turn around young people’s knowledge of unions and labor history in Connecticut. Students need this information delivered in a classroom setting.

To Summarize: 7 reasons why we need to teach labor history

1. It’s time to re-balance the scales. Most school children readily hear about the corporate leaders and politicians of our nation’s history; rarely do they hear about the heroes among our working people who struggled to bring equity and justice into the workplace and into our communities.

2. Trade unions in Connecticut and throughout the nation have contributed to our way of life. Few people know that our nation’s public education system, including its universities, is a product of the constant support of labor unions and their members.

3. Labor unions are part of Connecticut’s heritage. The state has always been a strong participant in worker struggles.

4. Most Connecticut families have a labor tradition. By the 1950s, more than 35% of Connecticut workers had joined unions. Their stories were “front page news” daily.

5. Teaching about labor has been largely ignored in our schools and textbooks. Academic standards and curriculum resources such as textbooks have historically ignored or been deficient in their treatment of workers and the labor movement. Significantly, many teachers want to cover this history in their classrooms, but there are few written curriculum standards by local and state educational institutions to encourage the teaching this material. An excellent website for labor curriculum is labor-studies.org/ (American Labor Studies Center).

6. The cost to School Districts will be minimal. The proposed legislation leaves it up to each district to develop its own method of teaching about labor history and collective bargaining. Teaching materials are readily available, and can be inserted within existing curricula.

7. Lastly, the story of labor and workers can provide more excitement in the classroom. The need to make history alive and interesting to students is critical in today’s schools. The struggles of working people will prompt many students to look back upon their own families and backgrounds (perhaps through oral history), making history more relevant.
"Our sons and daughters deserve to know that the fruits of our labor were not handed down to us by those in power but rather won by the efforts of extraordinary people who sacrificed to produce a better life for all of us."

Ken Germanson, president of the Wisconsin Labor History Society