

Testimony of

Jeff Helming
Newington Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

SB 1371 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A JUST CAUSE STANDARD FOR TEACHER CONTRACT TERMINATIONS AND MAKING THE DECISION OF A NEUTRAL HEARING OFFICER IN TEACHER CONTRACT TERMINATION HEARINGS BINDING ON THE PARTIES.

February 27, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Kushner, Representative Sanchez, Senator Sampson, Representative Weir, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

I testify today in support of Senate Bill 1371, which takes important steps toward addressing the educator shortage in Connecticut. This bill amends the Teacher Tenure act to make decisions of neutral arbitrator in the discipline proceedings binding on the board of education and implements a recognized labor law legal standard of “Just Cause,” which guides discipline in a way that is progressive and fair. These changes would give teachers the same rights and protections as noncertified staff—a critical step toward fairness in our profession.

Without these changes, teachers will fear that there may be unfair consequences should they advocate for their students’ needs or issues impacting them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Matthew Macaluso
Somers Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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This would go a long way in making a very interactive profession more attractive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Julie Chiffer
RHAM Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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Testimony of

Mallory Legman

Haddam-Killingworth Educator

Before the

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Testimony of

Nicholas Kokus
RHAM Educator

Before the
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This is important in all towns for all teachers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Elinore Mulligan
North Haven Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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This is such an important bill to further create equity in our profession!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Sarah Esposito
RHAM Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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I am in favor of this bill passing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Emily Lata
RHAM Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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Just cause is important to make sure things are being done fairly.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Tracy Dorau
RHAM Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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I watched an amazing educator have her 15 year career stripped from her because of a personal vendetta by our superintendent. She did not deserve what happened to her. Our students were done a huge disservice when she was terminated, even though a neutral arbiter did NOT agree. Our district lost an amazing educator for no reason.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Margaret Clifton
RHAM Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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It makes no sense under current law for paraeducators, administrative assistants, and custodians to have Just Cause, but leave teachers with a non-legally binding decision that could result in an unfair termination. All school employees, including teachers, should have Just Cause under the law.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Kimberly Gombotz
RHAM Educator

Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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It is unfair to have teachers who work so hard for their students have to worry about being terminated. It has happened in my district and has ruined lives for no good reason. This absolutely needs to change. We already have a shortage of teachers and so much to worry about with our jobs. This should not be something to have to worry about and we should be given the same rights as noncertified staff. Thank you for your time and making sure this goes into effect.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of

Jason Wnek
RHAM Educator

Before the
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'Just Cause' should be standard and is necessary to protect our rights.

Thank you for your time and consideration.