



March 22, 2021

**Appropriations Committee – Opposition to:**

**HB 5149** AN ACT EXCLUDING REIMBURSEMENTS TO STATE EMPLOYEES FOR MILEAGE AND PAYMENTS FOR OVERTIME FROM THE CALCULATION OF RETIREMENT INCOME.

**HB 5209** AN ACT EXCLUDING OVERTIME PAY AND LEGISLATIVE MILEAGE ALLOWANCES FROM THE CALCULATION OF STATE PENSIONS.

**HB 5750** AN ACT EXCLUDING REIMBURSEMENTS FOR MILEAGE AND PAYMENTS FOR OVERTIME FROM THE CALCULATION OF RETIREMENT INCOME.

**HB 5754** AN ACT EXCLUDING MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENTS AND OVERTIME PAY FROM THE CALCULATION OF RETIREMENT INCOME.

Chairman Osten, Chairman Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Brian Anderson. I am a legislative coordinator for Council 4 AFSCME. I am testifying on behalf of Corrections Locals 387, 1565, 391 and Council 4.

Our union strongly opposes House Bills 5149, 5209, 5750 and 5754. These bills take over time wages out of the state employee pension calculations.

Pensions should be based on true income, not a fiction. The baseline contract wage number for corrections employees, police officers, firefighters, hospital workers and others is a fiction.

Every year the state population rises, but state and municipal employee numbers shrink. Fewer and fewer public employees are asked to do more and more.

Corrections employees are constantly ordered in for hours exceeding their normal work hours. This is chronic. These employees work large amounts of mandated overtime.

As people's income grows from overtime pay, their lifestyle expands and changes. When they have no time to do normal home improvement because of the extra hours that they work, they hire some else to do it. It is wrong, at the end of their career, to then say, "Hey, we're going to pretend that we only paid you for forty hours of work during your career, now that you are retiring."

If overtime is too high, there are ways to control that. The biggest way is to hire more employees. It is not our members' fault that they are ordered to work a lot of overtime. Overtime is ordered by management. Let's face it. The state and towns save money by hiring fewer employees and using more overtime. This is the reason that overtime is used. It is used for employer convenience.

Often overtime interferes with our members having a normal life and engaging in family, recreational and civic activity. Often our members are mandated in to work against their wishes. It is wrong to penalize our members by denying them a pension based on true income.

Connecticut has cut its state employee pensions repeatedly. Governor Malloy brought in Boston College experts to examine our state's pension system. They described four of five tiers as "low pay." Each new tier has paid less than the last one. Connecticut has made pension "spiking" impossible by basing pensions on annual income over a worker's lifetime. There are

legal caps on the amount that a public employee can be paid in pension.

Every year the discussion of cutting or destroying public employee pensions comes up. Please flip the equation. Consider mandating what our peer countries, such as Canada, do – they mandate that everyone who works should have a pension. Actually implementing Connecticut's Retirement Security Authority would also help.

Thank you. I would be happy to answer any questions.