

**Testimony of
Richard Symonds**

**Labor & Public Employees Committee
February 8, 2021**

**Testimony in Favor of HB 6381 An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study the State Workforce
and Retiring Employees**

Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Senator Sampson, and Representative Aurora and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Richard Symonds and I have recently accepted the position of District Engineer in the Department of Transportation, District 4 Construction, located in Thomaston, CT. This is a managerial position and the decision to accept was very difficult based upon salary compression. The position I held previously was the Assistant District Engineer which was a managerial position before the Assistant District Engineers were successful in joining the A&R Union.

Typically, a promotion with the State comes with the expectation of receiving a 5% raise and the chance to advance or receive additional compensation with additional time served. In my case, a 5% raise put me at the maximum rate for a District Engineer. Add to this increased medical premiums, and an additional .5% payment to State FMLA sick leave bank, and the compensation for a promotion is less than the 5% others would receive. There is also a risk that if the rank and file get a COLA at the end of June, new managers could be denied. In the past COLA's have been denied if a 5% or greater increase in salary was received in the previous year.

Statistically, managers pay has not increased at the same rate as the rank and file. This has resulted in salary compression and no guarantee that future increases to the rank and file will be honored at a managerial level. There are numerous additions to daily responsibilities and compensation is not in line with the responsibilities.

As far as recruitment to maintain the best talent as state managers, there is no monetary incentive to help employees consider the managerial ranks as the best option. Currently, if an employee has the credentials to be a successful manager, higher salary compensation is more readily available in the private sector.

I am in support of bill #HB 6381 requiring a task force to be established to address the "retirement cliff" that is approaching. It became a difficult decision for me to accept my current position and I don't see how there are incentives for others to make this a career goal.

Sincerely,



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