

# Labor and Public Employees Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-910

AN ACT CONCERNING PERMANENT PARTIAL DISABILITY BENEFITS AND

**Title:** PENSION OFFSETS.

**Vote Date:** 2/16/2023

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 1/31/2023

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This legislation aims to protect the retirement rights and benefits of retirees who receive pensions from municipalities or special tax districts. It prohibits these entities from reducing or eliminating benefits granted to a retiree at the time of their retirement based on permanent partial disability benefits. The bill allows for changes regarding the administration of retirement benefits, so long as they remain equivalent to those provided before the change. This proposal thus aims to ensure that retirees receive the retirement benefits they have earned and are entitled to, regardless of received permanent partial disability benefits.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

No response was provided from the administration or relevant state agencies.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Ed Hawthorne, President, CT AFL-CIO:** They offered comments in strong support of this legislation. They stated that workers who have been subjected to injury that consisted of substantial loss of body part or a permanent partial loss of function should not be subjected to reduced pension benefits.

**Meghan Lyon, CT Trial Lawyers Association:** She offered testimony in support of this legislation, stating that payments are compensation for permanent injuries sustained through the course of employment and should be separate from any pension or retirement benefits.

Additionally, she suggested that workers comp benefits are separate from pension and retirement benefits and should not impact one another.

**Zak Leavy, Lobbyist, Council 4 AFSCME:** They offered testimony in strong support of this legislation. They stated that partial disability payment for loss of a body part and its function has nothing to do with a person's pension, claiming they are two separate financial items, and should be treated as such.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Edmond Mone, First Selectman, Town of Thomaston:** He offered comments in opposition to this legislation. He stated that this law would unfairly affect municipalities by eliminating a bargaining issue in favor of unions.

**Zachary McKeown, Senior Legislative Associate, CT Conference of Municipalities:** They offered comments in opposition to this legislation on the basis that the costs of this proposal are incalculable and volatile. Furthermore, they asserted that enactment of this proposal would circumvent the collective bargaining process and establish a precedent for future legislative harm to the collective bargaining process whenever a stakeholder is dissatisfied with an agreed upon result.

**Betsy Gara, Executive Director, CT Council of Small Towns:** They offered comments in strong opposition of this legislation. They claimed that this proposal would discourage claimants from returning to work due to the fact they would be receiving more compensation than if they were working. Furthermore, they cited concerns against municipalities stemming from high costs of this proposal, along with a dangerous precedent that would harm municipalities' ability to collectively bargain.

**Mitchell R. Goldblatt, Director of Human Resources, Town of Guilford:** He stated his opposition to this proposal. His concerns are based around high cost to municipalities and the fact that former employees could earn more in retirement than they do while employed,

**Reported by:**

**Date: 2/23/2023**

**Sebastian Musante Assist. Clerk**