

*Connecticut Insurance and Financial Services Cluster*

**Statement on Behalf of  
Connecticut's Insurance and Financial Services Cluster  
Regarding  
*House Bill 5460: AAC Captive Audience Meetings***

Labor & Public Employees Committee  
February 11, 2011

Aetna  
Bank of America  
Catlin Insurance  
ConnectiCare  
The Hartford Financial  
Services Group  
Hartford Steam Boiler  
Inspection & Insurance  
Company/Munich RE

ING Group  
InSource, LLC/ Virtusa  
Insurity/Lexis Nexis  
KPMG

MassMutual Financial  
Group

MetroHartford Alliance

NewAlliance Bank

Northeast Utilities

People's United Bank

The Phoenix Companies

PricewaterhouseCoopers

Prudential Retirement

Robinson & Cole, LLP

Savings Bank Life  
Insurance/Vantis Life

Sovereign Bank

TD Bank

Travelers Companies

UnitedHealth Group

United Illuminating

Webster Bank

XL Group plc

The Connecticut Insurance & Financial Services [IFS] Cluster, funded by its members, is committed to strengthening and advancing Connecticut's sixth largest industry sector which currently provides jobs for over 115,000 people and includes over 6,000 establishments within Connecticut.

As this vital and historic industry in Connecticut continues its recovery, business executives need confidence that Connecticut's legislative climate will remain steadfast and predictable in supporting business growth. Additionally, as the global recovery continues, the importance of an 'open for business' economic message will ensure that Connecticut can still compete for new jobs, capital and business.

House Bill 5460 significantly undermines the essence of a 'pro-growth' economic agenda particularly to our resident employers by banning 'political' topics to be discussed at 'all employees' meetings.

The bill challenges the very core of the employer- employee relationship by barring open communication. The wide definition of 'political' topics could restrict information on the current political climate, world events, developments at the State Capitol that could affect jobs, charitable giving or other community activities. Other stoppages could include informational updates on laws such as the Dodd-Frank Act which have direct correlation to jobs in Connecticut.

The IFS sector has made employer-employee communications a priority in its business operations. For example, the industry has instituted in-house communication vehicles, surveys and policies to foster communication and transparency to and from employer to employee.

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Further protections are in place under the *National Labor Relations Act* which provides for strict compliance that “guarantees the employer’s right to express an opinion about unionization as long as the employer does not also threaten reprisal or promise a benefit.”

With the federal law and protections in place, House Bill 5460 is redundant and anything but pro-growth. More importantly, it’s anti-job retention and anti-growth and sends the wrong message to our resident IFS businesses, employees, and those seeking a new place of business that Connecticut is ‘not open for business’.

As partners in the Connecticut economy, let’s work together in creating a predictable, healthy economic climate, not a harmful one. I ask that you reject House Bill 5460.

*Susan C. Winkler*

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