



Legislative Testimony
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**Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 7317,
An Act Concerning Urban and Rural Workforce Development**

Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is David McGuire, and I am executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 7317, An Act Concerning Urban and Rural Workforce Development.

As an organization that fights for equal opportunity for all, the ACLU-CT supports this bill, which would establish a grant program for eligible minority business enterprises in distressed municipalities to develop and increase the workforce in those municipalities.

Businesses owned by racial and ethnic minorities, women, and people with disabilities strengthen our state and offer employment for many of our residents. It is vital for the state to support these businesses and allow them to thrive and grow. Enabling minority business enterprises to establish work-based educational programs with boards of education would be beneficial to the businesses, students involved in the programs, and the municipalities as a whole. These programs will help students learn new skills and prepare them for entering the workforce as adults. Successful minority business enterprises and an educated and experienced workforce contribute financially to their community.

We strongly encourage the committee to support House Bill 7317.