



Legislative Testimony
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**Written Testimony Supporting
Senate Bill 863, An Act Concerning Employment Protection for
Members of the Civil Air Patrol**

Senator Maroney, Representative Borer, and distinguished members of the Veterans Affairs 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 Senate Bill 863, An Act Concerning Employment Protection for Members of the Civil Air Patrol. This bill would fill a gap in Connecticut's anti-discrimination protections by ensuring that employers cannot discriminate against members of the civil air patrol on the basis of their service or on their absence as a result of their service in the civil air patrol.

The ACLU-CT strives to guarantee that every person in Connecticut has equal rights. Members of the civil air patrol put themselves in danger to help save lives and keep Connecticut safe. This sacrifice deserves respect, not discrimination. Members of the civil air patrol deserve the right to employment protections during times when they are training for or responding to emergencies or life-threatening events. By prohibiting employers from treating absence from work during such times as unpaid time off, this bill affords members of the civil air patrol the ability to serve without fear of repercussions in the workplace.

Though Public Act 17-127 prohibits employment discrimination based on a person's status as a veteran and requires employers to allow members of the National Guard to take leave for service, members of the civil air patrol are not currently protected from employment discrimination in Connecticut. This bill would fill that gap and ensure that members of the civil air patrol can train and respond to emergencies without facing discriminatory employment actions.

This bill requires civil air patrol members to provide employers with as much notice of a civil air patrol-related absence as possible. This reduces any potential burden on employers in accommodating absences from work for training or emergency situations.

We strongly encourage the committee to support Senate Bill 863 to ensure members of the civil air patrol are protected from discrimination.