

Committee on Labor & Public Employees

H.B. 5276: *An Act Concerning Domestic Workers*

Public Testimony of the CT Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF)

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The Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) is a statewide nonprofit that advocates for and empowers women and girls in Connecticut, especially those who are underserved or marginalized. For forty-six years, CWEALF has been a leading advocate for policy solutions to enhance women's economic security and combat the gender wage gap.

CWEALF urges the committee to support H.B. 5276: *An Act Concerning Domestic Workers* to expand application of various labor laws to Connecticut's estimated 40,000 domestic workers.¹

According to research conducted by the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Connecticut domestic workers are primarily immigrants and women of color who work in private households and are their family's primary income earner. Domestic workers in Connecticut are currently excluded from various state labor laws and are therefore vulnerable to further discrimination and unfair treatment.

House Bill No. 5276 will cover major gaps in protecting domestic workers in the workplace by including domestic workers in discrimination and harassment protections and extends the requirement of employers to provide written job descriptions to employees to include specific information to the domestic work industry. This legislation also addresses additional gaps, such as requiring termination notice for domestic workers and creating mechanisms against retaliation. Domestic workers should not be forced to choose between their economic security or dealing with exploitation. Overall, H.B. 5276 ensures domestic workers are provided with the respect, dignity, safety and recognition they deserve.

Connecticut's domestic workers make important contributions to both our economy and the health and stability of Connecticut's families. By providing domestic workers with essential protection under the law and fair wages, Connecticut will join eight other states in making a statement that we value and respect all working people, regardless of whether they work in an office or in a home.

CWEALF urges the committee to support H.B. 5276. Thank you for your consideration.

¹ <https://www.domesticworkers.org/bill-of-rights/connecticut%E2%80%8B>