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**Written Testimony
Comptroller Kevin Lembo
January 31, 2017**

**Concerning
H.B. 5210 AAC Various Pay Equity and Fairness Matters**

Good morning Senator Gomes, Representative Porter, Senator Miner, Representative Bocchino, and Members of the Labor Committee:

Thank you for raising this legislation and for the opportunity to continue to show my support for efforts to make equal pay for equal work a reality. I supported the Governor's successful legislation on this issue, and I now support this next step toward ensuring pay equity and fairness.

According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the 2015 median annual earnings for women were \$40,742, while \$51,212 for men. Should the pace of change for the annual earnings ratio continue at the same rate it has since 1960, men and women will not reach pay equality until 2059. Women of color are especially affected by pay inequity. Hispanic women make \$0.54 on the dollar paid to a white man, and African-American women make \$0.63 on that same dollar. In fact, the median earnings for Hispanic women are below the qualifying income threshold for food stamps eligibility, at \$31,247 per year.

While there are a number of factors that contribute to wage disparities between men and women, this bill takes the necessary next step in helping to bring parity quicker to Connecticut women. It would prohibit employers from taking prior pay inequity into account when negotiating salaries, which would allow women to break out of a compounding cycle of the gender wage gap. And it would prohibit using maternity leave or medical leave as a basis for reduced salary increases, which invariably impacts women more than men.

I urge your support.

Thank you for your time.