



# Connecticut AFL-CIO

## FACT SHEET #8

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### S.B. 16 AA Protecting Municipal Retiree Health Insurance Benefits

Several private sector industries have attempted to reduce retiree benefits, even when those same benefits were included as part of the retirement agreement. This exploitation of the elderly is starting to be seen in some Connecticut municipalities.

In fact, Waterbury's retired fire fighters were forced to sue the municipality to protect their benefits. Ultimately, they were vindicated by the Connecticut Supreme Court but not before the group expended in excess of \$100K. However, it is widely believed that without establishing a clearer legislative intervention, similar attacks upon our most vulnerable population will continue.

This bill seeks to modify current statute to protect fire fighters, police officers and other municipal workers from having their benefits reduced or eliminated after retirement.

This legislation would give retirees the benefit of consistency, while allowing the municipalities the ability to plan – and to plan in the most

cost-effective manner possible.

Retirees are one of the most vulnerable groups of people in our society – it is unfair to victimize them.

Retirees have limited options available to them in their attempt to protect their retirement agreements. In most cases they cannot afford the burdensome expense route of seeking justice through the courts.

In many cases, during their working life, these retirees gave something up during the negotiation process to ensure their retirement would be safe. A deal is a deal. Retirees should be able to count on municipalities to uphold a lawfully negotiated agreement.

#### Special points of interest:

- Retirees are the most vulnerable of our citizens and have limited resources available to protect their interests.
- Workers cannot be represented by the union after their retirement.
- The only recourse for retirees who have been denied their contractual rights is through the courts...a costly and time consuming process.