



April 14, 2008

Honorable M. Jodi Rell
GOVERNOR, STATE OF CONNECTICUT
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Rell:

On behalf of the 5,000 State employees represented by CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, I am writing to seek your support for Senate Bill 673, "An Act Concerning Improved Telecommuting Programs for the State's Workforce."

Over ten years ago, I was part of a Department of Administrative Services Advisory Committee that developed the first telecommuting guidelines for State employees. I was shocked to learn about the limited application of this program for State employees. According to DAS, less than 1/2 of 1 percent of State employees participate in this program. With the price of gasoline heading toward \$4.00 per gallon and the congestion on our roadways, the State should be a leader in telecommuting and at-home work assignments. Instead we lag far behind private sector employers in the state. According to Department of Transportation figures, 9% of private sector state employers participate in telecommuting arrangements.

The arguments against telecommuting are the same arguments I heard about flex-time schedules twenty-five years ago when I negotiated the first programs for State employees. The arguments articulated today by the Department of Administrative Services are the loss of managerial and supervisory control and that some jobs, such as correction officer, do not lend themselves to telecommuting. Good managers will be able to provide proper supervision to ensure that that productivity will not decrease. The suggestion that corrections officers would telecommute is a straw man argument; no one ever asked to extend the program to those employees. These types of arguments against telecommuting show why the public and State employees believe that some in state service are impediments to innovation and quality.

As with flex-time schedules, the State and the employees' collective bargaining representatives can reach agreements with State agencies on telecommuting, especially under your leadership on this issue. We have successfully discussed and implemented these flex-time schedules in a number of state agencies.

While the pilot programs are called for under the proposed legislation for the Departments of the Environmental Protection, Developmental Services and Information Technology, telecommuting and at-home work arrangements could be easily implemented in the Departments of Transportation, Education, Board of

Michael J. O'Brien
President

Patrice Peterson
Secretary/Treasurer

Robert D. Rinker
Executive Director

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Education and Services for the Blind, Social Services, and Revenue Services.

With or without this bill, you can be a leader on telecommuting for State employees as you have been a leader on this issue for private sector employers, particularly in Fairfield County. CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 remains committed to quality public services and welcomes the opportunity to work with your Administration.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert D. Rinker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Robert D. Rinker

Executive Director, CSEA/SEIU Local 2001

cc: CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 Executive Council Members