



February 13, 2008

City of Hartford
COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL
550 Main Street, Room 208
Hartford, CT 06103

Re: **Public Hearing on Establishing a Task Force for Hartford's Living Wage Ordinance (LWO)**

My name is Stephanie Chisholm, and I work as a public school bus driver for First Student, Inc., the company contracted with the Hartford Public School District. My co-workers and I are responsible for the safe, reliable transportation for our communities' school children each and every day, and we take pride in the work we do. After all, we are often both the first and last school staff our students see on a daily basis.

As the elected president of the CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 Chapter representing school bus drivers here in Hartford, I am submitting this testimony in support of the formal resolution creating a task force to examine the effectiveness of the City's Living Wage Ordinance (LWO).

I appreciate Mayor Eddie Perez' proposal, because I believe the LWO must be expanded to cover more workers employed by companies contracted to do business with the City.

Nearly two years ago, our members were able to move our employer to recognize the LWO for all of its school bus drivers during contract negotiations. Bringing the LWO into affect at our worksite has made a real difference in my life, and has enabled nearly two hundred working families right here in Hartford to earn a self-supporting income.

One of the many benefits of the LWO is that it has begun to drive up standards in the school bus industry right. This benefits all of us by increasing retention and reducing turn-over among bus drivers. Thanks to the LWO, children in Hartford have safer and more reliable transportation to and from school.

The reality is that too few private contractors hired by the City provide their workers the means to earn a living wage. Expanding and strengthening the LWO is needed to ensure more Hartford residents can live and raise their own families in the city they serve.

Thank-you for your time and for hearing my voice on this critical matter.

Stephanie Chisholm

School Bus Driver, Hartford Public Schools, First Student, Inc.
President, Chapter 196, CSEA/SEIU Local 2001

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