



Testimony on House Resolution No. 11

Submitted by Isabel Blank, External Affairs Director

February 11, 2019

Good afternoon distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Isabel Blank. I am Manager, External Affairs at the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, and I am writing to testify on **House Resolution No. 11**. For questions or follow up, please contact me at isabel@yankeeinstitute.org.

I would like to applaud one portion of the Judicial Professional Employees Union Contract. Appendix A point 4 addresses necessary changes in light of the recent *Janus v. AFSCME (2018)* decision. The article allows employees to leave the union at any time on 30-days' notice, and states that the union has agreed to cover the employees' costs of litigation related to dues. We generally support this language and suggest it serve as a model for future collective bargaining agreements as they adjust to new precedents set by the *Janus* decision.

That said, both collective bargaining agreements before you today contain supersedence appendices. The appendices note laws that will be superseded if you approve these contracts. In Connecticut, collectively bargained government-worker contracts override existing state law.

Government unions' dominance in Connecticut has led to a two-tiered system of laws — one that unfairly advantages the special interests of government unions at the expense of ordinary citizens and erodes the legitimate power of you, our elected officials.

This entire system of contract legislation erodes the rule of law and undermines the very premise of our representative government. It eliminates your ability to serve as an effective legislator and protect equality in our state. It fundamentally privileges one segment of society above all others, by putting a select few above the law.

Understand that when you approve these contracts, you will change eight different laws for only a handful of people.

Please be aware of the power—good and bad—of collective bargaining agreements as you vote on these and future resolutions.