

The Connecticut General Assembly



House Democrats

Office of House Majority Leader Joe Aresimowicz

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MAJORITY LEADER ARESIMOWICZ AND MINORITY LEADER KLARIDES SUPPORT MANUFACTURING EDUCATION BILL

(HARTFORD) House Majority Leader Joe Aresimowicz (D – Berlin/Southington) and House Minority Leader Themis Klarides (R – Derby) jointly testified in support of HB 5423 – *An Act Encouraging Middle School and High School Students to Consider Careers in Manufacturing*. If passed, this legislation would establish partnerships between the Commissioner of Education and the manufacturing industry in order to encourage students to consider careers in manufacturing.

The bill would strengthen Connecticut’s workforce development pipeline by making sure the state knows (1) how many trained workers in manufacturing are needed to meet the demands of businesses in the state, (2) how many students Connecticut has the capacity to train, and (3) how to effectively advertise these career opportunities to students in middle and early high school grades.

“This bill is about making sure we educate parents, guidance counselors and students about the exciting and advantageous careers in manufacturing,” said Aresimowicz. “Manufacturing is still associated with the famous images of early 20th century factories, but much of today’s manufacturing is no longer what it was during our childhoods. These are the types of jobs we need more of: high quality, stable, family-supporting jobs.”

The need for qualified workers is a growing issue for manufacturers. According to a 2014 survey published by the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, manufacturers in Connecticut say that one of the biggest threats to their business is lack of available talent. The majority of those respondents also said they plan to grow their businesses over the next 5 years. Furthermore, according to the latest numbers from the Department of Labor, the state has seen a 2.1% growth in manufacturing jobs over the past year, to 161,800.

“The more we can do to get young people interested in these promising careers the better off Connecticut will be,” House Republican Leader Themis Klarides said. “Our state has a long tradition of adapting and growing its manufacturing base to meet the needs of the marketplace. This legislation will go a long way toward keeping with that tradition.”

The proposed bill would establish a program that looks to bring current workforce training programs – including the Advanced Manufacturing Technical Centers that are under the direction of the Board of Regents, the technical high schools throughout the state, the “Dream It, Do It” campaign organized by CCAT, programs that are run by private, independent colleges, and several others – together around the same table with manufacturers to figure out how many slots are available for students to earn the certifications and learn the skills employers need, how many more slots are needed, and to market all of these programs to our students.

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Joe Aresimowicz is serving his sixth term representing the 30th House District of Berlin and Southington in the Connecticut General Assembly, where he is House Majority Leader.