

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 14-128

HB5269

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2014**

**VOL.57
PART 14
4451 – 4808**

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 1, 2014

If all the members have voted, the machine will
be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5389 as amended by House "A".

Total number voting	140
Necessary for passage	71
Those voting Yea	102
Those voting Nay	38
Those absent and not voting	11

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill as amended passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 110.

THE CLERK:

On page 34, House Calendar 110, favorable report
of the joint standing committee on Labor and Public
Employees, Substitute House Bill 5269, AN ACT CREATING
PARITY BETWEEN PAID SICK LEAVE BENEFITS AND OTHER
EMPLOYER PROVIDED BENEFITS.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

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Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move for acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question is on acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Will you remark, sir?

REP. PERONE (137th):

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, LCO 5029. I would ask the Clerk to please call the amendment and that I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 5029, which will be designated House Amendment "A".

THE CLERK:

House "A", LCO 5029 introduced by Representative Perone, Representative Lavielle, et al.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The gentleman has sought leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there objection? Is there objection? Seeing none, you may proceed with summarization, sir.

REP. PERONE (137th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the interest of not only passing legislation that we think will help the State of Connecticut, we also believe in going back and revisiting and improving legislation where we, and laws that we think we can.

To that end, I'd like to offer the following. Basically, essentially what the amendment does, is it provides businesses the flexibility to administer paid sick leave in the same calendar fiscal year that they administer other employee benefits.

It allows businesses to report the number of employees, using the same method as FMLA and lastly, it would add to the service workers, radiologic technologists. I move adoption.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir.

Would you care to remark further on House Amendment "A"? The question before the Chamber is adoption.

Would you care to remark on House "A".
Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good morning.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

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Good morning, madam.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I rise in support of the amendment. This has been quite a while in coming. We had a bill like this before us last year that did not make it at the last moment. There have been a lot of difficulties with the paid sick leave legislation that was passed a few years ago.

Businesses have had difficulty calculating just how employees are eligible for taking the leave and how many employees they have. This relaxes the requirement somewhat and makes it a little bit easier for businesses to deal with this.

And at this point, honestly, anything that makes it easier for businesses to deal with the requirements in this state has some merit, so I would urge my, I would like to thank Representative Perone for his cooperation on this and all of his hard collaborative work and I would urge the Chamber to support it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, madam.

Would you care to remark? Would you care to remark further on House Amendment "A"?

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, if I may, a question for legislative intent?

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In lines 151 through 154 there's language where no employer shall terminate, dismiss or transfer and there is language that says, solely in order to not qualify as an employer.

Does the term solely apply to all three conditions that they shall not terminate solely, in order not to qualify, dismiss, solely, in order not to qualify or transfer, solely in order not to qualify?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Perone.

REP. PERONE (137th):

My feeling as to legislative intent that would apply to all three areas. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

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Thank you, if I could, I wasn't sure what that answer was. If he could repeat that, through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Perone, could you repeat your answer?

REP. PERONE (137th):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, my feeling is that it does.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you. I appreciate that answer.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir.

Would you care to remark? Would you care to remark on House Amendment "A"?

Representative Sampson.

REP. SAMPSON (80th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start by saying that I sincerely appreciate the efforts of the many parties that were involved in working on this bill and the amendment before us.

And I appreciate the philosophy that we are going to try and take a policy, which I believe is a

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completely unworkable bad policy that we spent 12 hours discussing and debating two years ago and turning it into a workable policy.

But unfortunately, I think that this bill and the amendment before us still relies on a premise that I believe is faulty and that the premise that I'm referring to is the idea that it is the role of the state government of Connecticut to get in between an employee and an employer to determine what their relationship should be.

And while I think this amendment may improve the circumstances of some businesses in our state with regard to the paid sick leave policy and make it somewhat more workable, I don't believe it goes far enough to improve that situation. In fact, I believe the only solution would be a full repeal of the policy.

Further, I want to just state that the lines that we just talked about in the amendment, between 151 and 154 that refer to whether or not an employer can terminate someone just to make a qualification goes against the standards by which employers in our state are allowed to hire and fire people.

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And I also think it's a very dangerous road to go down when we start determining who employers can hire and fire and how many employees they are dictated to have by our state government.

So for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to oppose this amendment and this bill.

Thank you very much.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir.

Would you care to remark? Would you care to remark further on House Amendment "A"?

If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor of House Amendment "A" please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye. .

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Those opposed, nay? The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Would you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Would you care to remark further on the bill as amended?

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If not, staff and guests to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Will members please return to the chamber immediately.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Have all the Members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast.

If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5269 as amended by House "A".

Total number voting 140

Necessary for passage 71

Those voting Yea 131

Those voting Nay 9

Those absent and not voting 11

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill as amended passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 252.

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CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2014**

**VETO
SESSION**

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SENATE

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May 7, 2014

Thank you, Madam President. I move all items on Senate Agenda Number 2 dated Wednesday, May 7, 2014 to be acted upon as indicated and the Agenda be incorporated by reference in the Senate Journal and the Senate Transcript.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered. So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I also have another item, an item to add to our Consent Calendar and that is on Calendar Page 24, Senate Calendar 552, House Bill 5269. If that item might be placed on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. And, Madam President, if the Clerk would then call the next marked item listed earlier.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On Page 12, Calendar 434, Substitute for House Bill Number 5355 AN ACT CONCERNING COLLABORATION BETWEEN BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS.
Favorable Report of the Committee on Education.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman, good evening, ma'am.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

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Calendar 500, House Bill 5547.

On Page 18, Calendar 507, House Bill 5530.

On Page 19, Calendar 512, House Bill 5386.

Calendar 514, House Bill 5521.

Calendar 516, House Bill 5500.

Calendar 517, House Bill 5305.

On Page 20, Calendar 527, House Bill 5592.

Calendar 528, House Bill 5453.

On Page 21, Calendar 531, House Bill 5299.

Calendar 533, House Bill 5290.

On Page 22, Calendar 541, House Bill 5456.

Calendar 539, House Bill 5294.

On Page 24, Calendar 551, House Bill 5588.

Calendar 552, House Bill 5269.

On Page 25, Calendar 564, House Bill 5489.

Calendar 562, House Bill 5446.

(HB5466)

On Page 26 --

THE CHAIR:

Hold on. Okay. Sorry. Please proceed.

THE CLERK:

On Page 26, Calendar 568, House Bill 5434.

Calendar 569, House Bill 5040.

Calendar 566, House Bill 5535.

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SENATOR LOONEY:

If we might pause for just a moment to verify a couple of additional items.

Madam President, to verify an additional item, I believe it was placed on the Consent Calendar and Calendar Page 30, on Calendar Page 30, Calendar 592, Substitute for House Bill 5476.

THE CHAIR:

It is, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

It is on? Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. If the Clerk would now, finally, Agenda Number 4, Madam President, Agenda Number 4 one additional item ask for suspension to place up on Agenda Number 4 and that is, ask for suspension to place on the Consent Calendar an item from Agenda Number 4.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President, and that item is Substitute House Bill Number 5566 from Senate Agenda Number 4.

Thank you, Madam President. If the Clerk would now, if we might call for a vote on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk. Will you please call for a Roll Call Vote on the Consent Calendar. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

An immediate Roll Call has been ordered in the Senate.

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An immediate Roll Call on Consent Calendar Number 2 has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Consent Calendar Number 2.

Total number voting	36
Necessary for adoption	19
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Two additional items to take up before the, our final vote on the implementer. If we might stand for just, for just a moment.

The first item to mark Go is, Calendar, to remove from the Consent Calendar, Calendar Page 22, Calendar 536, House Bill 5546. If that item might be marked Go.

And one additional item, Madam President, and that was from Calendar, or rather from Agenda Number 4, ask for suspension to take it up for purposes of marking it Go, that is House Bill, Substitute for House Bill 5417. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**COMMERCE
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**2014
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mhr/gbr COMMERCE COMMITTEE

February 27, 2014
10:00 A.M.

FRANK J. JOHNSON: Well --

SENATOR LeBEAU: -- be sweet.

FRANK J. JOHNSON: I -- I have respect for what
you've done and I appreciate it.

SENATOR LeBEAU: Thank you, very much, Frank.

FRANK J. JOHNSON: Thank you, very much, for having
me.

REP. PERONE: No, thank you.

Up next is Briana Fernandez, followed by
Jennifer Herz.

BRIANA FERNANDEZ: Hello. Thank you me, thank you
for welcoming me to the board. To the Co-
Chairs, the members of the Commerce Committee,
thank you for allowing me the opportunity to
speak about why paid sick days are so important
for workers like me here in Connecticut and why
I'm testifying on H.B. 5269.

Just last summer, I applied and was hired as an
employee at the local McDonald's in my hometown
of Manchester. One of my primary personal
goals was -- sorry -- my primary personal goals
in working there was to earn enough money not
only to take care of my basic living needs but
also to possibly save up for college, as many
other young people do in our state. And just
like other young people and all other, and all
people, for that matter, I occasionally come
down with an unfortunate cold or unforeseen
cold, flu or medical emergency.

And when the Connecticut General Assembly
passed the Paid Sick Days Act, in 2011, workers
like myself all across the state, who up until
that point had no -- sorry -- up until that

point --

REP. PERONE: Take your time.

BRIANA FERNANDEZ: My apologies -- up until that point had far too often been faced with choosing between our health and our wages, when coming down with illness, collectively exhaled a sigh of relief.

Folks like me and, folks like me who many times found themselves working while sick in an attempt to reach their personal and professional goals now had protection against employers who in time before passing, the passage of the law could fire workers for little to no reason.

Unfortunately, though, for me and other workers employed at workplaces not covered by the law's current threshold at, of 50 employers -- of 50 employees or employers -- I'm sorry -- or more, this important step in protecting workers' rights, not -- not to mention public health, simply does not apply. When I came down with illness that left me too sick to move, never mind, I was unceremoniously fired from my job with no legal protection or opportunity for dispute. That kind of sounded ridiculous, but I came down with a cold and I came to work; thank you.

It's no secret for saving up for college, for saving for college, working a minimum-wage job, but that, itself, is no easy feat. But for me and so many others, that is the one of the few options that we have. It's saddening to think that people who are working hard to get ahead and make their lives for ourselves, not including, not included in the law that aims to protect because a pro-business threshold of 50 employees or more prohibits their inclusion.

It's sadder; it's sadder still to knowing that the very same business groups who work to create the 50-or-more threshold are now supporting H.B. 5269, which could potentially, even more workers than the law does today. The sad, the sad truth is groups the CBIA or the NFIB and Connecticut Restaurant Association come before committees and lobby, run lobby in the halls of the State Capitol saying on one hand that the young people working a low-wage job should do all they can to improve their education to earn a better wage; on the other hand, of course, they kept them, themselves busy by launches campaigns against almost every effort that would protect workers like me while working --

SENATOR LeBEAU: Briana, can you please wrap it up?

BRIANA FERNANDEZ: Oh, my apologies.

SENATOR LeBEAU: You can keep wrapping it up.

BRIANA FERNANDEZ: So I want to skip from the script; okay.

SENATOR LeBEAU: Thank you, Briana.

BRIANA FERNANDEZ: Pretty much why, pretty much why I'm in, I'm opposed to this, because I think people should be able to afford to take a sick day when they need it and be able to work, still to have a job and not have to worry about losing their place or not having food on the table or being without monthly utilities.

And I would appreciate for your support the opposition of -- of this bill, for H.B. 5269.

I thank you, very much.

absolutely critical, I -- and you've, I really appreciate your -- your points.

And I think that, frankly, over the next 18 months that it -- it is a -- a great time for us to really evaluate where we're going -- going to take this forward. So I -- I, in a way, I sort of, I say this in want of a better of a term, kind of a -- a down payment on our, you know, our future, like where and, you know, where we're going to take this, you know, our -- our initiative. But I -- I agree with you completely. I just thank you for your testimony but also, again, for the great work you've done on behalf of the State of Connecticut and -- and the people you've helped.

CATO T. LAURENCIN: Thank you.

REP. PERONE: So, up next is a -- a Lindsay Farrell.

LINDSAY FARRELL: Good afternoon to the -- the Co-Chairs and the other members of the committee.

My name is Lindsay Farrell. I'm the Connecticut Director for the Working Families Organization, and I'm here to testify on 5269, which is to make changes to the paid sick days law.

You know, since we passed the paid sick days bill, in 2011, it's been a success. You know, families and workers can rely on that security and people don't have to as frequently make a choice between their paycheck or their job and their health and their family's health. In the sectors of the Connecticut economy most affected by the bill, the hospitality sector and -- and health care, jobs have steadily increased since the bill went into effect, so the -- the law has been a success.

We have concerns about this, the bill and the language this year to make changes. One of them is that it creates a loophole for manufacturing firms. It was always the intention of the bill that manufacturing jobs, being high-paying and -- and secure positions didn't need the paid sick days protection, but folks who do clerical work or work in a cafeteria at -- at one of those companies or do janitorial work for those companies, they are service workers, they are vulnerable, and they need the protection of the law.

Our other concern is that it makes it much easier for employers who are hovering around that threshold of 50 employees to skirt the law by laying a few folks off for one week of the year and then hiring them back later on, when they don't have to report it.

You know, since -- since the law was passed almost three years ago, it has not just been a Connecticut thing anymore. New York City just passed the paid sick days law. Laws have passed in Seattle, in Newark, in -- in Jersey City, Portland, Oregon; the law in Washington DC was expanded. You know, if we're going to take a look at fixing and improving upon the paid sick days law, then we will encourage you guys to do things that help cover more workers and give more workers that protection. You can go down on the threshold of employees; we can eliminate the job classification requirement; we can eliminate the franchisee loophole, which allows multiple establishments that are owned by one owner or one company to -- to skirt the law. There are some other, you know, suggestions that we would have.

So thank you.

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mhr/gbr COMMERCE COMMITTEE

February 27, 2014
10:00 A.M.

REP. PERONE: Okay. Thank you, very much, for your testimony.

Any questions? Well, it's just the two of us at the moment.

Now I think I appreciate your -- your written testimony, and we have it. If -- I have no doubt this is going to be heavily discussed, going forward, so you know, we might be reaching out to you for -- for more explanations on things going forward. But I think that's, I think we have a pretty good handle on -- on your testimony.

Thank you, very much.

LINDSAY FARRELL: Okay; thank you. I appreciate that. The -- the worker at the kits do want to be part of that process, so --

REP. PERONE: You go it.

LINDSAY FARRELL: -- thank you.

REP. PERONE: Okay; thank you.

Okay. Up next is Supriyo --

SUPRIYO B. CHATTERJEE: It's Supriyo.

REP. PERONE: -- Chatterjee. I'm sorry; can't read the writing, but --

SUPRIYO B. CHATTERJEE: Supriyo Chatterjee.

REP. PERONE: Thank you, very much; appreciate it.

SUPRIYO B. CHATTERJEE: Good afternoon to you all, the committee. Thank you, very much, for this opportunity, talk to you. SB 23

ERIC W. GJEDE: I -- I was very late to the game today and absolutely.

SENATOR LeBEAU: You had other committees?

ERIC W. GJEDE: I was just testifying in Labor, so I'm hoping you --

SENATOR LeBEAU: Oh.

ERIC W. GJEDE: -- guys are a little easier on me than they are.

Anyway, thank you, so much.

My name is Eric Gjede. I represent the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, and I'm here today to talk about two bills, and I'm actually, I -- this committee actually gives me the opportunity to support bills.

The first bill I want to talk about is Bill 5274, AN ACT CONCERNING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS AND DISCRIMINATORY HIRING PRACTICES. I just want to let you know, the -- the business community, a hundred-percent is, supports the intent of this bill which is to eliminate job postings that are discriminatory in nature. The only thing that we ask is that you consider not making or unemployed individuals a protected class within the CHRO statutes, which is how the bill is currently drafted. So we -- we agree that there should be a penalty for posting this type of ad. We don't think that an employer should be doing it. So I have provided additional language that you might consider to use in lieu of -- of that.

The other bill I'd like to talk about is bill 5269, AN ACT CREATING PARITY BETWEEN PAID SICK LEAVE BENEFITS AND OTHER EMPLOYER-PROVIDED

BENEFITS. This bill does three things and three things only. It adds flexibility in the type of year used to administer the paid sick leave law. Current law provides that the employer can only administer paid sick leave on a calendar-year basis; this would allow flexibility to administer it on a fiscal year or other 365-day period of time.

The second thing it does is fix the manufacturing exemption to -- to basically go the same way that the DOL is already interpreting the law. Right now there's an inconsistency; we just ask that it -- it gets, it gets fixed. I think there was a little bit of revisionist history testimony done earlier today that said that this was not supposed to apply to the clerical staff of manufacturers. Well, that's only not how the DOL is interpreting the rule but I can also vividly remember Senator -- or excuse me -- Representative Zalaski standing up for about nine hours on the House floor, saying that this did not apply to manufacturers. So I think, I think history is on our side on that one.

And, finally, this would enable employers to report the number of employees, using the same method as they do for FMLA. And the reason for this is because if you report the number of employees over a three-month period of time, as the bill or as the law currently is written, you tend to report more employees than you have because some folks leave and then you hire to replace them. This is, only thing this is doing is preventing people who have never had 50 employees from falling under the law. It does not take away the benefit from any person. In fact, none of the changes in this bill takes the paid sick leave benefits away from a single person who is entitled to it under the law today.

So I ask that you support this bill, and I thank you, very much.

And I'm happy to take any questions.

REP. PERONE: Thank you, very much.

I think my understanding, because I read the, I went through revisionist history because I think it was a clearly honest mistake. My understanding was Zeke was up for 11 hours.

ERIC W. GJEDE: And my apologies.

REP. PERONE: Don't worry about it. I -- I, because I'm pretty sure Zeke isn't going to even.

That -- that said, I -- I appreciate your -- your testimony. I really, you know, I've heard both sides pretty clearly. I'm just wondering if anybody else has any questions.

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hello, Eric.

ERIC W. GJEDE: Representative.

REP. LAVIELLE: Very nice to see you. And I remember that debate very well too; I was part of those hours at some stage.

Is there a difference between this bill and what we tried to pass toward the end of session last year?

ERIC W. GJEDE: That's a great question, and yes, there is a difference. But there is no difference between the bill that you -- this --

by "you," I mean this committee -- passed out of committee last year. What then happened after this bill passed out of the Commerce Committee was that it was directed to the Labor Committee. Several things were added in the Labor Committee, nothing that the business community opposed. But after it made it through the Senate on a unanimous vote, in fact -- and -- and I really appreciate that, Senator LeBeau -- the DOL realized that there were some problems with the language that was added by the Labor Committee -- and not the Commerce Committee -- and so it ended up getting stalled on the House floor while a debate occurred and it -- it, and amongst people off the floor.

And so, again, we'd like to, we'd like to try with the version that came out of the Commerce Committee last year. We have had some discussions with the folks who were behind interest groups pushing the additional changes, and they have agreed not to push for those changes on to this bill, maybe in another bill; I'm not sure. That's nothing that the business community will be involved in, but we would like to, if possible, keep this as is right now and hopefully pass and give some flexibility to the business community, so --

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you.

I -- I remember that night very, very well and the off-floor debates and the on-floor debates. And if it, I'm -- I'm glad to hear this is absolutely the same bill that we passed out of the Commerce Committee, and I share your view. I hope it will, it will remain intact and that it can just stay like it is, and we can go ahead and get it out.

Thank you, so much, for waiting so long, being so patient and --

ERIC W. GJEDE: Absolutely. I always --

REP. LAVIELLE: -- taking the (inaudible).

ERIC W. GJEDE: I'm happy to be here, happy to be testifying in front of this committee, so --

REP. PERONE: Thank you, very much.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. PERONE: I'm all set. This --

ERIC W. GJEDE: Nothing else, Senator? I think I'd have at least one more; no?

SENATOR LeBEAU: Oh, what that heck. Eric, yeah, I -- I -- exactly -- you know, I think you just hit the nail on the head in terms of what might happen to this bill. I think it has to be negotiated some, I think. Because I think -- oh, you're looking at a -- a debate that is going to be interminable. And, you know, they're -- it's almost like, you know, people are looking at, you know, an animal and one person thinks it's a horse, the other person thinks it's a -- a lion -- there's like seeing two different animals, so there needs to be a -- a common perception of what this bill does; number one. And number two, maybe an understanding about the language so that's worked out.

So I think it's incumbent upon, you know, I -- okay; we put, we brought the bill out two years in a row. If you want to see it happen this year, I think you're going to need to find some common ground with the labor folks who came in here earlier and opposed the bill.

ERIC W. GJEDE: Yeah, and -- and I appreciate that.

I -- I believe there are some misrepresentations that were made last year about the -- the actions that the bill does. And I'm, and then I -- I feel it's unfortunate that some of those, some of those groups didn't take at least a day during this past interim to -- to actually read the language to see what it does. But we're happy to continue to work with not only this committee but those groups as well.

SENATOR LeBEAU: Let -- let me say something. You're an interest group; they're an interest group.

ERIC W. GJEDE: Absolutely.

SENATOR LeBEAU: And they have -- their interests are different than yours, and we need to find, I guess, to have the common ground where there's common interest; so, that is what we need to do. And you -- you got to see things differently, but I think we could, I think that's possible, because I don't think that this bill is anywhere near as onerous as they perceive nor as innocent as you perceive. So hope with having left it at that, we'll -- we'll move on and see what we can do.

ERIC W. GJEDE: Yeah. I -- I -- nope; I'm all set.

REP. PERONE: Well said.

ERIC W. GJEDE: All right.

REP. PERONE: Thank you, very much.

ERIC W. GJEDE: Thank you.

REP. PERONE: I appreciate your testimony.

Up next is a Alan Tan, followed by Doug Hardy,

February 27, 2014

Members of the Commerce Committee,

I would like to testify on HB5269, the bill to weaken the paid sick days law.

I have worked at Duñkin Donuts for 8 years, and I make a little over \$10 per hour. At my job, I now earn paid sick days because of the law passed in 2011.

I have three children, and I work hard so that I can support them as best I can. But I make a low wage, and it gets gobbled up quickly by housing costs, food, clothing for growing children, the electric bill, gas for my car, and all the other expenses I have. To give you a sense of the difficult decisions low wage workers must make every day, when my car was totaled not too long ago, I had to pay my rent late in order to fix the car. My family, including my sister, relies on that car to get to work and to appointments.

Of course, sometimes I get sick, and sometimes my children do. It provides some security for my family that I won't lose pay or get fired if I have to call out for a day or two to take care of them, or rest to get myself better, or take them to the doctor. And families like mine need financial security wherever we can get it.

Please don't do anything to water down the paid sick days law – if anything, the law needs to be expanded so that it covers more workers.

Kevin Burgos
Hartford

February 27, 2014

To the Commerce Committee

Testimony on HB 5269 changing the Paid Sick Leave law

My name is Devon Johnson and I used to work at Subway at 443 Hartford Rd. in Manchester for 2 years. I worked over 20 hours per week and never received paid sick days because my employer had fewer than 50 employees, and therefore was not covered by the law.

I sometimes had appointments for my health and missing work made my life more difficult. I have to pay rent, I have a car payment and I have other bills. When I missed work for an appointment or for when I was sick, I had to make tough choices and was sometimes I was late on my bills.

The good news is that I recently got a new job as a driver at a large company, and now I get paid sick days. It gives me real peace of mind to know that I won't be fired and I won't lose pay if I need to call out sick or go to the doctor at some point, and I am glad that this right is protected by Connecticut state law. And I'm sure that if I use my paid sick days later on, it will be important to my budget that I get paid for that time.

All workers should have the benefit of paid sick days, including employers with fewer than 50 employees. I saw how profitable Subway was when I worked there: let me tell you they may be a smaller employer but they are not struggling. They can afford to let their sick employees get 5 days a year.

Please keep the paid sick days law intact, and please expand it to cover more workers. Employees like me are grateful for the protection this law gives us, but we need to build upon that to protect more workers and their families.

Thank you.



**Written Testimony of Debra L. Ness
President, National Partnership for Women & Families
on H.B. 5269, An Act Creating Parity between Paid Sick Leave Benefits and
Other Employer-Provided Benefits**

**Submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly Joint Committee on Commerce
February 27, 2014**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **in opposition to H.B. 5269**. The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care and policies that help women and men in the United States meet the dual demands of work and family. We are proud to work with public officials and community groups across the nation to provide public education about the need for common sense policies such as paid sick days.

Connecticut led the country with the adoption of the first statewide paid sick days law in 2011. This groundbreaking public policy guaranteed approximately 287,000 private sector workers the right to earn paid sick days.¹ Since the implementation of the law on January 1, 2012, workers covered by the law have been better able to care for themselves, their children and their spouses without jeopardizing a day's pay or their jobs.

In the two years since the law's implementation, the number of jobs in Connecticut has grown across industries, including in the leisure and hospitality industry, which was among the most affected by the law's requirements.² Employers who testified to the legislature in 2011 that they would be forced to close their doors or lay off workers if the law was enacted were hiring for new positions and advertising new establishments in 2013.³

Connecticut's paid sick days law has broad support from both workers and employers. A statewide survey conducted shortly after passage found that nearly three-quarters of voters favored the state's adoption of the law.⁴ A study conducted late last year found that more than three-quarters of *employers* expressed support for the law. Employers surveyed reported that the law had a minimal impact on costs, and few employers said they made adjustments such as increasing prices or reducing employee hours because of the law. In addition, some employers identified positive effects of paid sick days, including improved employee productivity and morale.⁵

Like Connecticut, other jurisdictions that have adopted paid sick days policies have experienced significant positive effects. In San Francisco, home to the country's first paid sick days standard, the number of businesses and jobs in the city grew relative to business and job growth in surrounding counties after the paid sick days law was implemented, including in the retail and food service industries.⁶ Three years after implementation, two-thirds of businesses said they support the law,⁷ and the Vice President of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, the organization that led the fight against the law with dire

of Columbia recently strengthened and expanded its law to cover a greater number of workers, and New York City is in the process of doing the same.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the committee to reject H.B. 5269. Given the success of the state's groundbreaking paid sick days law in protecting workers, and the fact that the impact on employers has been positive or neutral, there is no reason to weaken the law and force more workers to choose between their paychecks or jobs and their health or their families' health. Rather, the committee should follow nationwide trends and consider proposals to strengthen the law, as other jurisdictions have done, to bring more workers within the law's protection.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

¹ Williams, C (2014, January 7) Personal communication

Ellen Bravo
Executive Director, Family Values @ Work Consortium
Testimony in Opposition to HB 5269
An Act Creating Parity Between Paid Sick Leave Benefits and
Other Employer-Provided Benefits
February 27, 2014

To Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, Senator Crisco, Representative Becker, Senator Frantz and Representative Lavielle, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill today.

My name is Ellen Bravo and I am the director of the Family Values @ Work Consortium. Family Values @ Work is a national network of 21 state and local coalitions helping to spur the growing movement for family-friendly workplace policies such as paid sick days and family leave insurance.

Our coalitions represent a diverse, nonpartisan group of more than 1,000 grassroots organizations, ranging from restaurant owners to restaurant workers, faith leaders to public health professionals, think tanks to activists for children, seniors and those with disabilities. In addition to Connecticut, Family Values @ Work coalitions are active in California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, Washington, D.C., and Wisconsin.

The FV@W Consortium was proud to support the passage of Connecticut's paid sick days law in 2011, and we commend this legislature for having taken action on such a crucial issue.

We cannot support HB 5269 in its current form. Paid sick time is a necessity for many workers in this economy – families who are trying to juggle work and personal responsibilities, and still make ends meet. We have several concerns about the current bill:

- By changing the reporting period to just one week of the year, this bill would make it easy for employers to “downsize” for that short time to skirt the law, and then rehire their employees back to full size afterwards.
- The expansion of the manufacturing loophole will further exclude service workers. This means that service employees at manufacturing firms would be carved out, leaving food service, janitorial staff, retail staff and other low-wage service workers without this vital protection.

Connecticut's paid sick days law has been a success. Recent analysis has shown that the law has been helpful for workers, at a minimal impact to employers and with no harm to employment.



Family Values @ Work is a multi-state consortium of 21 state coalitions working for paid sick days, family leave insurance and other policies that value families at work.

in the relevant sectors. This evidence confirms similar findings in San Francisco and Seattle. And since Connecticut's law passed almost three years ago, paid sick days standards have been passed in Seattle, Portland, New York City, Jersey City, Newark and expanded in Washington D.C.

Connecticut should look at these other laws as a model for strengthening its own. Seattle's ordinance covers all employees regardless of business size, and New York City's will soon cover employers with 5 or more employees, guaranteeing job-protected sick days for those in the very smallest firms. None of the laws in other locations narrow the requirement to only service occupations. New York had originally excluded manufacturing but is about to add coverage to that sector in an expanded version of the law expected to pass soon.

The bill's title claims to establish parity between this bill and other employer-provided benefits. The parity we should look to is that established by the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which affirms that women's pay cannot be made equal by lowering that of men. We should look not to the lowest common denominator, but one that will lift all of us – workers and their families, employers' viability through lower turnover and increased productivity and sales, and the state's economy. Employees are also consumers. Losing income or a job because of being a good parent or following doctor's orders hurts family economic stability and diminishes all of us.

We encourage this committee to reject HB 5269 and instead pass a policy that will expand benefits to additional hard-working men and women, instead of diminishing the access to paid sick time for those who already have protection under the law.



Family Values @ Work is a multi-state consortium of 21 state coalitions working for paid sick days, family leave insurance and other policies that value families at work.



Patrice Peterson
President

Stephen Anderson
Secretary/Treasurer

Robert D. Rinker
Executive Director

February 27, 2014

General Assembly
Commerce Committee
Room 110, Capitol Building
Hartford, CT 06106

**RE: H.B. 5269 – AN ACT CREATING PARITY BETWEEN PAID SICK LEAVE BENEFITS
AND OTHER EMPLOYER-PROVIDED BENEFITS.**

Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee:

My name is Patricia Gaskin. I am a Hartford school bus monitor, resident of Hartford, and president of CSEA SEIU Local 2001's School Bus Council. I submit this testimony in opposition to H.B. 5269

As a bus monitor, I ensure special-needs children get to school safely on the school bus. From 6 AM to 9 AM, we do pick up runs to deliver kids to school, mid-day runs from 10 AM to 12 PM, and from 2 PM to 5 PM we take them home again. On any given day I come into contact with more than 20 different special-needs children, and all the while we are in close quarters on the school bus.

Before the paid sick days law passed, a lot of bus drivers and monitors had to go to work when they were ill. Now that we have paid sick days, we can take a day off to recuperate when needed. That isn't just good for the bus drivers and monitors; it is good for the kids too. You spread germs when you go to work sick.

We fought to get paid sick days for a very good reason. It isn't right to force people to go to work sick. H.B. 5269 weakens Connecticut's paid sick days law, and that is wrong. I urge you to vote No on H.B. 5269.

Patricia Gaskin
8 Orange St, Apt. 1
Hartford, Ct 06106



INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH
1200 18th Street NW, Suite 301 • Washington, DC 20036

Testimony of Claudia Williams
Before the Commerce Committee Leadership
Regarding H.B. No. 5269
Institute for Women's Policy Research
February 26, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to address the question of how the “Act Creating Parity between Paid Sick Leave Benefits and Other Employer Provided Benefits” would affect employers, workers, families, and the general public in Connecticut. The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialog, and strengthen families, communities, and societies.

Access to paid sick leave promotes healthy work environments by reducing the spread of illnesses,¹ increasing productivity,² and supporting work and family balance.³ Paid sick leave allows people to take time off work to recover from personal illnesses and to tend to family members' health without the fear of lost pay or other negative consequences. In addition, the economic and public health benefits of earned sick leave coverage are substantial, and are well documented, including stronger, safer work environments; increased productivity; reduced turnover costs; and reduced health care costs.⁴

Bill H.B. No. 5269, currently being considered by the Connecticut legislature, would reduce access to paid sick leave, which research suggests would have negative impact on the economy and well-being of the state population. This bill would exempt manufacturers entirely as long as their business is primarily engaged in activities that fall under NAICS's manufacturing categories; this would mean that workers who serve clerical or administrative functions in one industry would be treated differently than workers with the same job responsibilities in other industry.

The current law requires that service workers earn paid sick leave if the business they work for employs at least 50 people in Connecticut during any quarter of the previous year. Changing the policy such that an establishment is considered a small employer by measuring only a specific week during the year instead of during any quarter, would create potential to miscategorize employers. Evaluation of paid sick leave policies find that the policies have few, if any, negative effects in generating profits, attracting the most talented workforce, and creating jobs. Evidence from jurisdictions that have passed paid sick leave ordinances, including Connecticut, have all been positive.

⁶ Drago, Robert and Vicky Lovell 2011 *San Francisco's Paid Sick Leave Ordinance Outcomes for Employers and Employees* IWPR Report #A138. Washington, DC Institute for Women's Policy Research. <<http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/San-Fran-PSD>> (accessed February 26, 2013)

⁷ *Seattle Met.* "Study: San Francisco Restaurants Support Paid Sick Leave" Calkins, Andrew. May 9, 2011. <<http://www.seattlemet.com/news-and-profiles/publicola/articles/study-san-francisco-restaurants-support-paid-sick-leave>> (accessed February 26, 2013).

⁸ Branche, Yolanda. 2013. Audit of the Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act of 2008 Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

⁹ The Main Street Alliance of Washington 2013. *Paid Sick Days and the Seattle Economy: Job growth and business formation at the 1-year anniversary of Seattle's Paid Sick and Safe Leave law*

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FUTURE FOR EVERYONE

#MoveCTUp

Testimony of Eric W. Gjede
Assistant Counsel, CBIA
Before the Commerce Committee
Hartford, CT
February 27, 2014

**Testifying in Support HB 5269 AAC Parity Between Paid Sick leave Benefits And Other Employer-
Provided Benefits**

Good morning Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee. My name is Eric Gjede and I am assistant counsel at the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA) which represents more than 10,000 large and small companies throughout the state of Connecticut.

We support the common sense changes made in HB 5269.

After passage, ambiguities in the paid sick leave law forced the labor department to spend two years touring the state to explain the law to the business community. While conducting these presentations, it became clear to both the state's labor department and business community that clarifications to the law were needed. Additionally, many indicated that the administrative burden to comply with the law could be lessened if some flexibility was added for businesses.

The changes proposed in this bill provide businesses with a little flexibility in how they administer the law. It should be noted that the proposed changes would not take away the benefit from a single person currently entitled to it under law.

Here's how this bill would help businesses:

1. It provides businesses the flexibility to administer paid sick leave on the same calendar or fiscal year that they administer other employee benefits.
2. Manufacturers were never supposed to be subject to the paid sick leave law. Removing the word "establishment" fixes a legal loophole that could result in manufacturers with more than one facility being subject to the law.
3. Allows businesses to report the number of employees using the same method as FMLA. This would prevent businesses that never had more than 49 employees at a given moment during a three month period from having to report former employees – thereby becoming subject to the mandate as a result of the natural fluctuation in the workforce.

These simple fixes to paid sick leave will resolve legal ambiguities and help make the law work better for both employees and employers.

We thank you for your effort in making these simple, common-sense corrections to the law.

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Connecticut Working Families Organization
 30 Arbor Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 connecticutworkingfamilies.org
 (860) 523-1699

February 27, 2014

Testimony IN FAVOR of HB 5269 AA CREATING PARITY BETWEEN PAID SICK LEAVE BENEFITS AND OTHER EMPLOYER-PROVIDED BENEFITS

Representative Perone, Senator LeBeau, and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue today.

In 2011, Connecticut made history by passing the nation's first statewide paid sick time guarantee. Over 200,000 workers had access to paid sick days to use when they were sick, when a family member is, to seek medical treatment, or to deal with an incident of family violence or sexual assault.

Since its passage, employment in the affected hospitality and health care industries has increased in Connecticut since the law went into effect in January 2012,¹ even as other industries have fluctuated back and forth.

More importantly, working people and their families can rely upon this protection now, and thousands are no longer forced to make the choice between their job, and their health and the health of their family.

HB 5269 is unsupportable by Working Families in its current form. Essentially, this legislation takes paid sick time away from people who currently have it.

- It cuts out workers in every job in the manufacturing industry at all facilities. Current law exempts manufacturing establishments from having to provide paid sick days based on how the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) classifies the type of activity conducted at each of their establishments. A manufacturer with administrative and production facilities in separate locations is now required to provide paid sick days at the administrative facility, but not the production one. This bill would exempt manufacturers entirely as long as their business is "primarily engaged in activities" that fall under NAICS's manufacturing categories, regardless of the activities they conduct at different facilities. That broad, standardless language would create a significant loophole. Workers who serve particular functions (clerical, administrative, etc) in one industry would be treated differently than workers with the same job responsibilities in another industry. There is no conceivable reason for this amendment other than to carve a larger loophole for particular organized and lucrative businesses.
- It creates an incentive to become a "small employer for a week" to evade the law and prohibit workers from earning sick time. The current law requires that service workers earn paid sick days if the business

¹ <http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/sectors/leisure.asp>
<http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/sectors/educational.asp>

they work for employers at least 50 people in Connecticut during any quarter of the previous year. This bill proposes to substitute a single, specific week – the first week in October – as the time period for determining an employer's size. An employer who employs more than 50 people most of the year could slash their staff for one week in October and claim not to meet the threshold. The potential for employer abuse is enormous.

Connecticut should not move backwards on this issue, we should move forward. When the legislation was being debated years ago, detractors claimed that passing a paid sick time requirement here would crush Connecticut's economy. Not only has that not been the case, but the policy has been passed in many other jurisdictions since then – Seattle, Portland OR, New York City, Jersey City, Newark – and it has been expanded in Washington DC. All of these other policies have a lower threshold for coverage; the Seattle ordinance, and soon the New York City ordinance will cover employers with 5 or more employees; San Francisco, Portland and Washington D.C.'s ordinances cover all employees. In the New Jersey cities the smallest firms covered at 10; no other paid sick days policy applies only to service workers.

We are proud of Connecticut's paid sick days law, and we all should be. This law has provided real protection to workers who need it very desperately to take care of themselves and their families without facing the loss of wages or a job. As we've done before, we have shown that Connecticut can be a leader in developing policies that support families and help them succeed in today's economy. This law has been a success – the only detractor is that it should cover more workers.

Working Families cannot support 5269 in its current form, but could if this legislature took the opportunity to really "fix" the paid sick days law and considered some of the following expansions:

- Lower the threshold for employees in the definition of employer
- Expand or eliminate the job classification standard.
- Close the "franchisee loophole," which allows multiple businesses owned by the same owner to file in such a way that they skirt the law, despite being a successful enough venture that their aggregate employment is over 50.
- Ensure that all employees are protected when calling out sick from being fired, even those who have not been at their employer long enough to have worked the requisite 680 hours.

Please consider real improvements to this law alongside technical fixes, and reject any version of 5269 that only takes away paid sick time from workers who currently have it.

Thank you.

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February 27, 2014

To the Co-Chairs and members of the Commerce Committee:

Testimony regarding HB 5269 Paid Sick Days

Submitted by Briana Fernandez

To the co-chairs and members of the Commerce Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak about why Paid Sick Days are so important for workers like me here in Connecticut, and why I testifying on HB 5269.

Just last summer, I applied and was hired as an employee at a local McDonald's in my hometown of Manchester. One of my primary personal goals in working there was to earn enough money to not only take care of my basic living needs, but to also save to go to college just as so many other young people do in our state. And just like other young people, and all people for that matter, I occasionally come down with an unforeseeable cold, flu or other medical emergency. When the Connecticut General Assembly passed the Paid Sick Days Act in 2011, workers like myself all across the state who up until that point had far too often been faced with a choice between their health and their wages when coming down with an illness, collectively exhaled a sigh of relief. Folks like me who many times found themselves working while sick in an attempt to reach their personal and professional goals, now had protection against employers who in the time before passage of the law could fire workers with little to no recourse.

Unfortunately though, for me and other workers employed at workplaces not covered by the law's current threshold of fifty employers or more, this important step in protecting workers' rights — not to mention public health — simply does not apply. When I actually came down with an illness that left me too sick to move, never mind work I was unceremoniously fired from my job with no legal protections or opportunity for dispute.

It's no secret: saving for college working a minimum wage service job is no easy feat, but for me and so many others, that is one of the few options that we have. It's saddening to think that people who are working hard to get ahead and make a better life for themselves are not included in a law that aims to protect them because a pro-business threshold of fifty employees or more prohibits their inclusion. Sadder still is knowing that the very same business groups who worked to create the fifty or more threshold are now supporting HB 5269 which could potentially even more workers than the law does today.

The sad truth is, groups like the CBIA, NFIB and Connecticut Restaurant Association come before committees and lobby in the hallways of the State Capitol saying on one hand that young people working low wage jobs should do all that they can to improve their education to earn a better wage. On the other hand of course, they've kept themselves busy by launching campaigns against almost every effort that would protect workers like me while we're working to return school to improve our skills. This kind of greed fueled, two-handed rhetoric where the rich blame the poor for being poor and spend untold amounts of money lobbying for large corporate employers instead of using that money to protect workers rights and wages is not only sad, it's sickening.

That's why I am here to oppose HB 5269 and any other bill that would in anyway negatively modify our current Paid Sick Days law. Connecticut's Paid Sick Days should be expanded — as it has been in New York City, Seattle and several other municipalities since it's passage in our state in 2011 — to include more employees, by way of a lower threshold — not less. Support for a bill like HB 5269 will only serve to put our states most economically challenged workers at severe financial risk.

No worker in this state should live with the fear that one missed day of work due to personal illness or that of a loved one, or even the need to attend a doctor's appointment, may put him or her in financial jeopardy. No worker in this state should fear that their dreams of owning a home, providing for their family or in my case, going to college - can be derailed just by catching the common cold or flu as all people do. I can't say this for sure, but I would find it extremely hard to believe that employees at the CBIA, NFIB or Restaurant Association live with this fear.

In closing, I strongly urge the esteemed co-chairs and members of this committee to vote in **OPPOSITION** of HB 5269 in its current form, and only support legislation that will cover **MORE** workers. I ask that you think of my story and thousands of other untold stories of workers in our state who are struggling to make better lives for themselves and their families and desperately need all of the protections that Paid Sick Days provides.

Thank you,

Briana Fernandez

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**Testimony of
 The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
 Before the
 Commerce Committee
 February 27, 2014**

Re: H.B. 5269, AA Creating Parity Between Paid Sick Leave Benefits and Other Employer-Provided Benefits
H.B. 5275, AAC the Learn Here, Live Here Program and Business Creation

Senators LeBeau and Frantz, Representatives Perone and Lavielle, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) regarding the above referenced bills.

H.B. 5269, AA Creating Parity Between Paid Sick Leave Benefits and Other Employer-Provided Benefits

Access to paid sick days is beneficial for women for a variety of reasons including the fact that women are more likely to take time off from work to care for a sick child. Seventy-one percent of mothers with children under age 18 are in the workforce¹ and 80% of mothers have primary responsibility to take their children to medical appointments.² Without the ability to take paid time off from work to care for herself or her sick child, a mother's economic stability may suffer.

H.B. 5269 would erode the significant progress made by the passing of Connecticut's paid sick days law. Specifically, this bill would cut out workers in every job in the manufacturing industry at all facilities from being covered by the original law. It also provides incentive to employer's to become a "small employer for a week" and evade the law by changing the current requirement that service workers earn paid sick leave if the business they work for employs at least 50 people in Connecticut *during any quarter of the last year to a single specific week in October*.

Maintaining family friendly work place policies, like access to paid sick days, is critical for all workers but especially women. The importance of supportive work/life policies and practices is clear; employees exhibit more positive work outcomes, such as job satisfaction, commitment to employer, and retention, as well as more

¹ Families and Work Institute, *Times Are Changing: Gender and Generation at Work and at Home*, 2009
 <http://familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/Times_Are_Changing.pdf>

² A Better Balance, *Paid Sick Time and the Health of Your Children: What You Need to Know*, August 2011

PCSW Testimony
Before the Commerce Committee
February 27, 2014
Page 2 of 2

positive life outcomes, such as less interference between job and family life, less negative spillover from job to home, greater life satisfaction, and better mental health.³

H.B. 5275, AAC the Learn Here, Live Here Program and Business Creation

H.B. 5275 would mandate that the Department of Economic and Community Development establish the Learn Here, Live Here program and would allow funds from the program to be applied to the creation of a new business within the state.

Housing

The Learn Here, Live Here programs intent is to encourage students who attend college or technical school in the state to stay in the state after graduation. To do this, the program provides incentives for first-time home buyers to ease the cost of home ownership. This is significant because Connecticut has been experiencing a "brain drain" for many years. Talented and energetic young people that received their educations in the state are leaving in high numbers, in large part due to the high cost of living. As the baby boomer generation reaches the age of retirement it is critical that there are younger workers to fill the ranks.

Business Creation

If this bill is passed the second aspect of the program would be to support the creation of new businesses. The same population (graduates from a Connecticut institution of higher education) would be eligible for incentives that would ease the costs associated with the establishment of a new business within the state.

Over the past few years there has been a marked increase in the number of entrepreneurs, including female entrepreneurs in the U.S. According to a study done by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 12.3% of working adults ages 18-65 were starting or running a new business in 2011. The same study showed that women are starting to catch up to men – for every 10 men that create a new business there are 8 women doing the same thing.⁴

Supporting a young woman's dream of homeownership and/or creating her own business is a smart move for Connecticut's economy. Keeping talented young people in the state will ensure that Connecticut's workforce remains strong and vibrant, even as the baby boomer generation leaves the ranks.

We thank the committee for your attention to these matters.

³ Families and Work Institute, The National Study on the Changing Workforce, 2002
<<http://www.familiesandwork.org/site/research/summary/nscw2002sumin.pdf>>

⁴ Forbes, Closing the Gender Gap for Women Entrepreneurs, Dec 2012 <<http://www.forbes.com/sites/babson/2012/12/05/closing-the-gender-gap-for-women-entrepreneurs/>>