



# Orange Research Inc.

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Testimony – March 14, 2006

Susan G. Baum  
Director, Human Resources,  
Orange Research, Inc.

Re: HB 5740 – An Act Concerning Ergonomics and Workplace Safety

Dear CT Labor Committee Members:

My name is Susan Baum and I am the Director of Human Resources for Orange Research, Inc. Our business is a family owned manufacturing company that started during the early 1960's in the basement of our founder's home. We are located in Milford, Connecticut and have fifty-four employees at the present time.

The past four years have been very difficult and challenging for the manufacturing industry, especially here in Connecticut. We have worked hard to maintain our competitiveness by embracing lean manufacturing techniques and principles, which eliminate waste and reduce costs. We have also adopted a continuous improvement philosophy, where our employees are asked to continually come up with improvement ideas, including those concerning safety within the workplace.

While I'm sure the Legislatures' hearts are in the right place, the above Act is anti-business and gives me great pause, for the following reasons:

1. Where does the Legislature believe the money to support and comply with this Act will come from? As I mentioned above, manufacturing companies and other small businesses within Connecticut are struggling to compete and often times, survive, in this business climate.
2. This Act is naïve and too complex, due to constantly changing science and technology.
3. Our company has a very active Safety Committee, who is always looking for ways to improve the health and safety of our employees.
4. Companies, especially small companies like our own, tend to have an excellent safety record and really *care* when an individual gets hurt (as of April 7, 2006, if all goes well, we will have gone 2 years without a lost time accident!). We want to have a safe working environment, in order to keep our employees healthy and happy. By doing so, we are able to keep our customers delighted, by supplying them with the products they order on a timely basis.
5. I am concerned about the **HIPAA implications of this Act**. Specifically, the proposed Act in Section 1. Section 31-40v (d) lines 55 and 56 state "no such review or analysis shall involve the disclosure of the identity of the employees affected by such injuries and illnesses". The reality is that in a small company like ours, the Safety Committee would automatically know whom the injured or ill party is by looking at the listed documentation proposed by the Act for analysis.
6. And finally, Section 31-40v (c) regarding providing incentives for employees to report early symptoms of MSD's, scares the living daylights out of me! Doesn't anyone remember the **contagious days** of carpal tunnel? Enough said.

Put simply, the burden placed on a small company, like ours, would be unbearable if this Act was passed into law. Thank you.

Sincerely,

**Susan G. Baum**

Susan G. Baum  
Director, Human Resources



*"the differential pressure people"*