



CONNECTICUT

**TESTIMONY OF
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS
BY
ANDY MARKOWSKI, CONNECTICUT STATE DIRECTOR
OPPOSING
SB-714, AAC RETALIATION FOR THE USE OF PAID SICK LEAVE;
SB-715, AA REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO CITE A REASON FOR TERMINATING EMPLOYEES;
BEFORE THE
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 10, 2009**

The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business advocacy association, respectfully submits the following comments opposing the aforementioned bills:

Opposing SB-714 – Small business owners know that their employees are their most valuable resource, and they work hard to train and retain employees by creating a comfortable workplace and rewarding them for a job well done. However, government rules and regulations make labor issues more complicated than ever.

It's important to remember that small businesses must operate differently from large businesses; they do not have human-resources departments to track the changing standards and mandates that affect their workforce and workplace. NFIB urges the legislature to simplify employment laws and processes for small business, eliminate burdensome mandates and prevent the expansion of cumbersome regulations that punish the small businesses that create the majority of Connecticut's jobs. Provisions such as those contained in SB-714 run contrary to this goal, open up employers to the potential for increased frivolous litigation, and potentially hamper the ability of private employers to make legitimate personnel decisions.

Opposing SB-715 – This bill appears to potentially alter the "at-will" employment rule in Connecticut, which allows employers and employees to end an employment relationship for any reason or for no reason at all. Small businesses and their workers often rely on "at will" employment relationships. It is the concern of small business that if they need to provide a reason for termination, does that not mean that the employees are no longer "at-will"?

Additionally, requiring the notices of termination to be kept for 10 years is unnecessary. Small business owners continuously cite problems complying with burdensome government regulations, including "paperwork", and specifically "state and local paperwork" burdens. (See 2008 "*Small Business Problems & Priorities*", NFIB Research Foundation). Finally, small business owners are concerned that passage of this bill will invite even more litigation for employers. Frivolous lawsuits create a climate of fear for small businesses. While some claims are legitimate, a large percentage are completely without merit. However, individuals and entities that are sued still have to defend themselves, and this defense is often costly to both business and ultimately their workers and consumers.