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To Members of the Labor Committee:

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB-6187, which would require Connecticut employers to provide paid sick leave. Like so many bills our state legislature considers, this is another that would substantially increase our employees' workload and our business costs. As a result we would have to re-evaluate all of the benefits we provide our employees.

We own and operate two seasonal businesses in CT. These businesses employ hundreds of college and high school students each spring and summer - providing needed jobs with good pay. We operate from May through September and take good care of our seasonal employees. Many of them return each season and are paid well above minimum wage - we know they are working to save, put themselves through college and share the financial burdens faced by their parents. We provide them with free meals and uniforms which helps to alleviate their work-related expenses. Working for our companies helps these young people to develop a solid work ethic which will serve them well as they seek and find more permanent employment after high school and college.

It is discouraging also that the members of our legislature don't ever consider the impact of their proposals on "seasonal" business like ours. Although we have several hundred part-time, seasonal employees, we have only 10 full-time, year-round employees. And whenever a bill is proposed to apply to businesses with more than say 50 employees, we are thrown into the larger employer category on the basis of our seasonal staff numbers.

Right now Connecticut businesses are all struggling to survive. It is certainly not the time to burden them further with new regulations and cost increases. I ask you to truly 'represent' me and my fellow CT employers who are sending you this same message. We urge you to reject this proposal and help the business community continue to provide good jobs by controlling labor and workplace costs in our state.

James D. Cunningham
President