

Mark Dziubek
Southington, CT
Labor Committee 2-24-09
Testimony in Favor of HB 6187

Thank you committee members for giving us the opportunity to testify today. I am here to speak in favor of HB 6187. My name is Mark Dziubek, I am a factory worker. In my Union I am the Vice President of the cap council of the UAW in CT. I am also the Vice President for my local union 712.

My local is an amalgamated union – made up of two or more plants. We have two; Wallace Barnes and Theis Precision Steel, both out of Bristol CT.

My plant has sick days four per year. We can only use one per Quarter. If I get sick I must be better by the next day or I have to go to work sick. I could call out sick with no pay but that's not an option with me. Mortgage payments, taxes, heating bills, light bills, phone bills, car insurance – all of them are going up in cost while my wages stagnate. So off to work I go, sick or not.

I am also a family man with kids. Having children means they also get sick and can't go to school. This means lost time since someone has to stay home with the kids. But if I miss too much time I could be fired, and not all companies are understanding. State law mandates we can miss only one day a year so without a collective bargaining agreement, you get one day a year to be out. Don't you or your kids get sick?

But I guess I'm one of the lucky ones, I have paid days off. My sister's plant Wallace Barnes was forced to give up there paid days in 2004. They had a choice take a pay cut or give up benefits. They gave up benefits, even though the cost for a few sick days a year is substantially less than the cuts in pay being threatened. So sick or not, off to work they go.

Lets look at they bigger picture here: employees go to work everyday sick and ill and with no option but to go to work that way. They serve our food, they work in retail stores, they are our healthcare workers. They are those of us who can least afford a missed payday.

Most of the time people do what's right, but when they don't, citizens look to their elected officials to make it right. A few paid sick days a year greatly outweighs the harmful effects of having our service employees going to work sick, spreading germs, infecting other co-workers and finally then the public. This legislation is far overdue. And it is also the right thing to do.

I urge you to support HB 6187 for sick days. Thank you.