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**Testimony
Labor and Public Employees Committee**

SB 63 *An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees*

Connecticut Water Company is a public water utility that provides water service to nearly 90,000 customers in 55 towns throughout Connecticut. We employ approximately 225 people and are proud of our long record of customer service, regulatory compliance and environmental stewardship. Like so many businesses in Connecticut, we are working hard to meet the needs of our customers and our employees, and remain financially stable in this economy.

Connecticut Water recognizes the importance of providing our employees with a safe work environment and competitive benefits. We have long provided our employees paid time off through a combination of vacation and sick time. We do not provide a designated number of days or allow employees to accumulate sick time, but we do not limit the number of sick days for an employee illness. We also allow our employees paid time off for illness of a family member. Despite that generous practice, we feel we must oppose SB 63 that would mandate paid sick leave.

We find the prescriptive nature of the bill to be problematic as it specifies how sick time is to be accumulated, used and accrued. We suspect that even with our current policy, there could be questions regarding the interpretation and applicability of specific provisions in the bill. We are concerned there could be unintended consequences and costs and we may have to modify our practices and/or recordkeeping to ensure we can demonstrate compliance with the law as proposed. This is particularly disconcerting when we know we already have a very favorable paid sick time policy for our employees.

We are concerned that this additional mandate will make it even more difficult for Connecticut businesses to compete, particularly in these current economic times. We urge the Committee to reconsider this proposal.