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February 25, 2010

To Members of the Labor Committee:

My name is Marian Barbieri and I am the Vice President of Human Resources for New Castle Hotels & Resorts with headquarters in Shelton and hotels in both Shelton and Norwalk, CT.

I am writing to voice my opposition to SB-63, which would require Connecticut employers to provide paid sick leave. This proposal will substantially increase our business costs and could force us to reevaluate the other benefits we provide our employees.

We are an industry that has many part time employees – students, working parents, seniors looking for a few hours of work, people with other jobs, etc. etc. Part-time employees allow us to give our full time employees valuable time off for rest, family time etc. and help us fill those holes that a 24/7 business finds itself having from time to time.

As these employees do not work a lot of hours, they are expected and needed to come to work when scheduled - having them call off “sick” is not really an option we can afford. For example a smaller hotel typically has one full-time employee working 5 nights a week as a night auditor and a part timer working the other 2 hours. The part-time employee must be held accountable to coming to work so that the full-time employee receives some much needed rest, family time, etc. (and the employer avoids overtime which is an expense it cannot afford in this sick economy or even a healthy one).

We give our full-time staff all the pay and benefits we can afford – we are a good employer. Our employees have a first class medical and dental plan, life insurance, 401k plan with match, paid time off, etc. but not our part time employees. Many of our part time employees have other jobs and they enjoy these types of benefits there, but not with us – we could not afford to give them these benefits as we are such a lean margin business. Mandatory sick benefits is a bad idea for my and many other businesses – we are barely getting by as it is and this type of thing would just force us to revisit our staff to find other economies to minimize the impact – thus negatively impacting our full time staff who give us 30+ hours a week for the benefit of those who work less often.

We urge you to reject this proposal and work with the business community to control labor and workplace costs in Connecticut. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marian R. Barbieri".

Marian R. Barbieri