

LaBonne's MARKETS

February 25, 2010

To Members of the Labor Committee:

My name is Robert LaBonne Jr and I am the President and CEO of LaBonne's Market's with Supermarkets in Watertown, Woodbury and Salisbury CT. We employ 225 associates and have been in business since 1962 and we are now in our 3rd generation.

I am writing to voice my opposition to SB-63, which would require Connecticut employers to provide paid sick leave. This proposal will raise my operational costs dramatically at a time with sales being down and expenses going up. I can not understand why anyone would think about putting more pressure on CT businesses in this economy. If you pass this bill I will be forced to cut back my help, lay off some full time workers with benefits. In addition we will have to review all the other added benefits we provide our associates and most likely cut them back. Some of these benefits are our 10% associate food discount, short term disability, long term disability and tuition reimbursement or our donation budget which we very generously give back to our local communities. These are just a sample of those added benefits which we would most likely eliminate or reduce.

We currently offer 40 hours (5 days) of sick or personal time for all full time associates. Your plan is a 30% increase in that benefit, plus the cost of giving it to many high school and college students who I feel do not need this benefit. This bill could add tens of thousands of dollars in benefit costs to my business at a time when we are doing our best to keep all our help, give yearly raises and stay competitive. If you pass this bill, everything changes and it will force us to make deeper cuts across the board.

I strongly urge you to reject SB-63 and not burden Connecticut businesses with mandates that will reduce benefits and cut jobs. It is counter productive in my opinion.

Thank you for your time regarding this matter,

Robert LaBonne Jr
President CEO