

TO: MEMBERS OF THE LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE

FROM: CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, LOCAL 2001 SEIU

DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2010

RE: PLEASE SUPPORT HB 5202: AAC TELECOMMUTING OPTIONS FOR STATE  
EMPLOYEES (WITH SUGGESTED AMENDMENT)

Dear Friends:

Thank you very much for Raising House Bill 5202. Our Union Supports this proposal; and we respectfully request one change to the language contained within Subsection (a). We respectfully contend that the language should be amended because we do not believe that workers' collective bargaining rights should be legislatively restricted or prohibited

**Please delete the text:** "Such Telecommuting and work at home programs shall not be subject to collective bargaining under the provisions of chapter 68, including, but not limited to, interest arbitration, and such programs and any matter involving an employee or employees participating in such programs shall not constitute the basis for a grievance or be subject to arbitration under any collective bargaining agreement."

**In its place, please consider inserting the following text:** "The guidelines for any telecommuting and work-at-home programs developed pursuant to this subsection shall be developed by the Commissioner of Administrative Services in cooperation with any interested employee organizations separate and distinct from any collective bargaining discussions, negotiations or arbitrations between such employee organizations and their employers."

**The following are the reasons to Support HB 5202 (As Amended):**

We respectfully contend that expanded telecommuting options can increase efficiencies among certain designated employees in state service, and will reduce traffic and be beneficial to our environment – All good things!

Below are a couple of examples (based upon work performed by our members at DEP and DDS) that support our strong belief that an expanded state employee telecommuting program will truly be good for state government and for our taxpayers:

"Susan Jones" (hypothetical person) works at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Susan's job is to travel to different regulated environmental sites throughout the state to inspect and review compliance. Susan lives in Southington. Currently, Susan leaves her house in Southington and travels east for 30 miles to DEP Headquarters in Hartford to "punch in." Susan then leaves DEP and travels 60 miles west to Danbury to inspect a site. After the inspection, Susan travels 60 miles east all of the way back to DEP in Hartford to type up her inspection report. At the end of the day, Susan leaves DEP and drives 30 miles west to her home in Southington. Susan travelled 180

miles; 120 of which would have been reimbursed by the State at 55 cents per mile (the round trip between DEP and Danbury). Susan burned a lot of gas, threw a lot of hydro-carbons into the environment, contributed to traffic on the roadways, and spent 3 hours doing nothing but driving. Susan could have been working on other projects during all or part of the 120 mile drive-time.

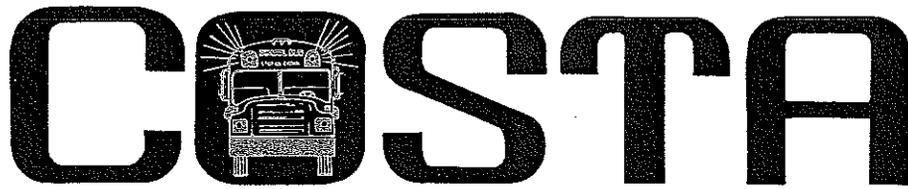
If Susan were allowed to participate in a telecommuting program, her day would be potentially much more productive and certainly much better for the environment. She would also have wasted less gas driving around the state. Under the telecommuting program, Susan may have been able to leave her house in Southington go directly to the site in Danbury (30 mile drive). After the inspection, Susan could have travelled back to her house in Southington and typed-up the inspection report (30 mile drive). In this example, Susan only drove 60 miles; and the State would only have to reimburse for 60 miles; instead of 180 miles. Presumably, Susan would also have had more time to work on other projects and go out and perform other inspections. The Environment and the roadway conditions also benefit by virtue of the fact that Susan drove 120 fewer miles under the telecommuting program.

A similar situation arises for the teachers in our Birth-to-Three program at the Department of Developmental Services. These teachers are assigned to visit disabled children throughout the state; and write follow-up reports. For the same reasons outlined for Ms. Jones above, it would be a lot better for the State if the DDS Birth-to-Three teachers were allowed to telecommute—they would not have to use a lot of time and fuel travelling to the DDS Office in East Hartford essentially for the purpose of Punching IN/OUT and writing reports. The teachers could definitely work with more kids; and obtain fewer costly mileage reimbursements under a telecommuting program; and even do the Environment and our roadways a great service.

Telecommuting programs should even be seriously considered for state employees who don't necessarily have "field" jobs like Ms. Jones at DEP and the Birth-to-Three Teachers at DDS. The state of Connecticut currently spends tons of money on office space and parking lots. Maybe two computer programmers at the Department of Information Technologies could telecommute, for example, on a part-time "3 day in office – 2 day telecommute" schedule; these two folks could share an office/cubicle and even share a parking space; thereby saving the state money.

Obviously, we understand that there are many state workers who are not eligible for telecommuting programs (e.g., corrections officers who work in our prison facilities). We also understand that some folks may be suspicious of telecommuting programs based upon the old-school belief that some people won't do their work at home, and that they "need to be at their desks in their offices so that their bosses can keep an eye on them." However, using the examples of Ms. Jones at DEP and the Birth-to-Three Teachers at DDS from above, the fact is that these folks have responsibility for writing a certain number of case reports, regardless as to whether they are writing the case reports at home or in the office. These folks will also be able to see more clients and prepare more reports if they don't have to spend as much driving to and from their state agency offices.

Thanks very much for your Support of House Bill 5202.



**Connecticut School Transportation Association**

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Statement by  
William D. Moore  
Executive Director  
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Before the  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
February 25, 2010

**Raised S.B. Number 63 An Act Mandating Employers  
Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees**

Sen. Prague, Representative Ryan, Honorable Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is William D. Moore. I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut School Transportation Association – COSTA. COSTA is a trade association comprised of owners and operators of school buses, student transportation vehicles and other associate members. Our membership of more than 125 companies and Boards of Education includes nearly all of the providers of student transportation in Connecticut. Our industry safely operates more than 10,000 school buses and student transportation vehicles (STVs) that safely transport nearly 500,000 children to and from school safely every day.

I am appearing before you today regarding Raised S.B. No. 63 An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees.

We oppose this measure for several reasons:

- It is an unwarranted intrusion by state government into the internal management operations of private companies.
- Nearly all of our member companies – large and small – provide paid leave to their employees in order to attract and retain good employees. Those companies

should be allowed to determine the amount of sick leave to be provided to their employees based upon the needs of the business.

- The cost to our industry, who employ over 12,000 good, hard working employees in every city and town in the state will be in excess of **\$3,000,000**, not including the cost to hire temporary replacement workers, and not including associated payroll taxes.
- The cost is an *unfunded mandate on local and regional boards of education*.
- That cost, \$3,000,000 will be *directly passed on* to the local and regional boards of education that utilize private carriers for their student transportation.
- The cost will have a *direct affect* on local and regional school districts that operate their own student transportation.

Given these concerns, we respectfully request that you *reject* Raised S.B. Number 63 An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter. I will be happy to respond to any questions that you might have.

# CAHS

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**Testimony before the Labor and Public Employees Committee**  
**S.B. 63: An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees**  
**Submitted by Maggie Adair, Deputy Director**  
**Connecticut Association for Human Services**  
**February 25, 2010**

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Ryan, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Maggie Adair, and I am Deputy Director at the Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS). CAHS is a 100-year-old statewide nonprofit organization that works to end poverty and engage, empower, and equip all families in Connecticut to achieve financial security.

CAHS is a partner in **Everybody Benefits, Connecticut's campaign for paid sick days**. I urge you to wage your support for **S.B. 63, An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees**.

It is important to note that employers would be in compliance with this bill if they already provide any other paid leave accrued at a rate equal of greater than described in the bill. Other paid leave includes paid vacation, flextime, compensatory time, personal days or paid time off. Employers already providing one or a combination of paid time off would not have to provide additional sick days; they would simply allow the employee to use this paid time off if they are sick. This is very reasonable.

There are compelling reasons to support paid sick days.

**Paid Sick Days promote a healthier work place.** When employees go to work sick, they spread their germs and get other people sick. Think about people who care for the elderly in nursing homes, the school cafeteria workers who feed our children, or the restaurant workers who prepare your nice dinner out. According to research from the National Partnership for Women and Families, 78 percent of employees working in food service and accommodations lack paid sick days.

**Paid Sick Days support family economic security.** Low-wage workers who do not have paid sick time cannot afford to miss a day off – sick or not. Working parents risk losing their jobs if they are forced to miss a work day because they are disabled from the flu or because they need to care for a sick toddler. In this protracted recession when jobs are extremely scarce, we do not want people to lose their job simply because they are ill. The University of Chicago found that 11 percent of Americans had been fired for taking time off when sick, or for caring for a sick family member, while 12 percent had been warned that they would be fired if they took sick time.

**Paid Sick Days are good for business.** Employees who come to work sick are less productive and take longer to recover from illness. They are also more likely to infect co-workers, which compounds reduced productivity. When the National Partnership for Women and Families created an economic

impact analysis for paid sick time legislation in Connecticut, it found the savings for businesses were larger than the costs. This bill will not affect businesses with less than 50 eligible employees, and provides a mere minimum of protection for the most vulnerable in the work force.

**Paid Sick Days allow workers to seek health care early on.** Workers without paid sick days are more likely to avoid seeking care and end up in expensive emergency rooms. They are less likely to receive preventative care, which would keep them healthy.

Currently 40 percent of Connecticut workers do not receive paid sick days from their employers, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The United States is the wealthiest country in the world, and yet does not provide the right for a worker to get sick. This bill will allow hard-working citizens to earn paid sick leave; it is not just given to them. **Paid sick leave is a long over-due minimum work standard.**

S.B. 63 will benefit everyone in Connecticut, especially children and parents. More than 650,000 Connecticut workers are forced to choose between their health and pay. Many of these citizens are parents who need to stay home when their children get sick. Parents should not have to risk employment in order to care for their children. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, half of mothers miss work when a child gets sick. Of these, half lose pay when they take the time off.

Our low-wage work force has the highest percentage of workers lacking paid sick days. Nationally, 77% of low-wage workers do not have paid sick days – these are the people who can least afford to miss a day of pay. These are the workers that keep the economy running: child care workers, food service workers, school bus drivers, retail clerks, and maintenance workers. One lost day of pay can mean the difference between paying for housing or putting food on the table. The right to take sick time should not be defined by employment status and income.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

Good afternoon. My name is Alice Pritchard and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF). CWEALF is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women, girls and their families to achieve equal opportunities in their personal and professional lives. I am testifying today on behalf of the Allied Health Workforce Policy Board in support of *SB 171 An Act Establishing a Licensed Practical Nurse Program*.

The Connecticut Allied Health Workforce Policy Board (AHWPB) was established in Public Act 04-220 (*An Act Concerning Allied Health Workforce Needs*) to conduct research and planning activities related to the allied health workforce. The Board began meeting in March 2005 and issued its first report to the legislature in February 2006. Throughout its tenure, the Board has met regularly to discuss current initiatives in allied health in the state, gaps in workforce data, issues related to educational programming, and recruitment and retention of the workforce, as well as researching and developing solutions to allied health workforce shortages.

In the February 2006 report to the legislature, the AHWPB identified the need for a comprehensive state faculty staffing plan to address workforce shortages in all allied health professions. The plan was intended to determine the faculty necessary to meet current and projected labor market training needs in all areas, across all public and private institutions and outline the current and needed resources for allied health programs to meet the workforce shortages.

Interview data from faculty having program oversight and management of over 20 discrete allied health program areas, coupled with Department of Higher Education graduation data and CT DOL ten year occupational projections, and online student registration data showed an allied health worker shortage in 15 (44%) of the 34 identified career areas; and an oversupply in 19 areas.

The area of LPN was found to be undersupplied when analyzed on a one year basis but matched when you average the two year cycle figure of graduates to demand. Because for many of the programs the length of study is 18 months, graduation figures spike every other year.

The CT DOL indicates that there are 324 annual openings per year and expects a 13% increase between 2006 and 2016 (over 1,000 positions). The CT Technical High School System's LPN program graduated 345 students in January 2010. The Legislative Program Review and Investigation (PRI) Committee's recent report on postsecondary alignment found that employers have a 4% vacancy rate for LPNs despite graduates from public and private educational providers. The report does show an over production of graduates in 2008 but doesn't provide 2007 data which would show no graduates because of the 18 month program cycle.

Clearly, these programs play a critical role in meeting this demand. However, Governor Rell's mitigation plan announced on November 24, 2009, included suspension of all LPN programs at the Connecticut Technical High Schools denying the next class of approximately 400 students' entrance into the program. This decision closes the only publicly funded LPN programs in the state and will directly impact employers' ability to hire trained professionals. In addition, this

closure diminishes the work supported through the Career Ladder Initiative that has been done to develop a career pathway from LPN to RN through the state's public universities.

Thus, the Allied Health Workforce Policy Board is in full support of reinstating the LPN program and we urge your support of SB 171.

I thank you for your time and am always available to answer any questions or provide additional information. Copies of *Allied Health Workforce Policy Board's Annual Legislative Report* were sent to your offices earlier this month.