

OFFICERS

Jessica Fenner, *Co-President*
Michelle Noehren, *Co-President*
Meghan Forgione, *Action Vice President*
Joan Chrisler, *Treasurer*
Mary Grace Peak, *Membership Coordinator*



BOARD MEMBERS

Christa Allard
Elizabeth Cafarella
Laura Bachman
Donna Stimpson
Sarah Uhl

CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES

Marguerite Boslough
Irene Senter

Testimony of
The CT Chapter of the National Organization for Women (CT NOW)
Before the
Labor and Public Employees Committee
February 25, 2010

Re: S.B. 63, AA Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Days to Employees

The CT Chapter of the National Organization for Women (CT NOW) strongly supports S.B. 63, AA Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Days to Employees. We believe that the issue paid sick time is a women's issue. The lack of paid sick days disproportionately harms women because throughout their lives women generally remain the main caregivers for their families. Additionally, 71 percent of mothers with children under the age of 18 are in the workforce. And in dual-earning families, women contribute an average of 44 percent of their family's income. Therefore, if a woman lacks paid sick leave but needs to take time off for a pregnancy-related doctor's appointment, or to take care of a sick child or care an elderly parent, she might be jeopardizing not only her own health and that of her loved ones, but also her family's economic well-being.

Women need paid sick time throughout their entire lifespan as working adults. Young women who are starting families need sick time to attend to their needs during pregnancy. A healthy pregnancy requires over 12 doctors visits, many being weekly check in appointments towards the end of the pregnancy. We all want women to be healthy and have healthy children, so we need to support women by providing them paid time off, especially throughout this important period of their lives.

As women develop their families, they continue to need paid sick time to care for their children. Today, most women work outside of the home, making the need for paid sick time even more critical. Working mothers should not be forced to decide between caring for their children and losing pay or going to work and worrying about their sick child.

Lastly, as the baby boomer generation ages, the need for paid sick time will become even more crucial for working women's economic stability. Research shows that there are rising numbers of the "sandwich generation" or those who are caring for both a minor child and aging parent. Paid sick days are invaluable in supporting these working women to successfully balance both their work and family obligations.

CT NOW strongly supports legislation aimed at providing employees with paid sick days. The time has come to pass this reform and send the message to women that not only are their contributions in the workplace valued, but so are their contributions to their families.