



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE THEMIS KLARIDES
ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH DISTRICT

23 EAST COURT
DERBY, CONNECTICUT 06418

HOME: (203) 735-5911
OFFICE: 1-800-842-1423
FAX: (860) 240-0207

E-MAIL: Themis.Klarides@housegop.ct.gov

DEPUTY REPUBLICAN LEADER

MEMBER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Testimony before the Labor Committee
February 25, 2010
In Opposition to Senate Bill 63
“An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees”

Chairs Prague and Ryan, Ranking Members Noujaim and Guglielmo and members of the Labor Committee, I am here to testify in strong opposition to Senate Bill 63, “An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees.”

Connecticut is already the “least business friendly” state according to Expansion Management Magazine. It has the 5th highest costs of doing business, according to the Milken Institute and The Connecticut Business and Industry Association. We’ve already lost 94,000 jobs during this recession and we’re dead last in job growth since 1989 among all states.

Knowing these facts, why are we even considering this?

At a time when we should be doing everything we can as a state to encourage businesses to *grow* jobs, a proposal like this just doesn’t make sense.

The bill before you would mandate that businesses employing 50 or more persons provide up to a full week of paid time off per year. This free time starts accruing as soon as the employee has worked 13 weeks and may be carried over to the next year.

Connecticut would be the first state to mandate this requirement and passing this bill would certainly exacerbate our reputation - as one of the most unfriendly states to do business and promote job growth. SB 63 purports to apply only to large businesses – but most large businesses are already providing paid sick leave. At the very least, this bill increases the cost of doing business in this state. That alone would be bad enough, considering the current economic climate. Even more devastating would be the effect

this bill would have on job creation by smaller businesses. As soon as an employer creates its 50th job, it has to figure out a way to provide almost an entire year's worth of unpaid time off for its employees. With the passage of SB 63, what incentive is there for a small business to grow?

Paid Time Off legislation has failed wherever it's been tried. Even the states of California, Ohio, New Jersey and Washington have rejected it. And for good reason - This bill is a typical "one size fits all" proposal that disregards the realities that employers must deal with every day and fails to account for the nature of our workforce or the business demands employers face in an increasingly competitive market.

Even our legislature has rejected this proposal multiple times in the past. Both Democrats as well as Republicans - when it came time to give their final approval to this bill - have been smart enough not to strike this blow against the job creators in this state. I urge the members of this committee to reject this bill. We should be talking about how to create jobs and support business. I look forward to working with you all on those types of initiatives, but not this one. Thank you.