SB 63

AN ACT MANDATING EMPLOYERS PROVIDE PAID SICK LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES.

To the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Wanda Cobbs, and I am a school bus driver in West Hartford. I work for First Student, which is a transportation company hired by the school district, and they don't provide paid sick days for their bus drivers or monitors.

Working as a school bus driver in West Hartford is more than just a job -- it's a real public service. The kids I drive are like family. I watch them grow up every year.

But when I get sick, I feel like I'm out of options. I'm a single mom raising three kids of my own, and money is always tight. I can't afford to stay home.

But at the same time, if I'm sick, how can I give the students I drive the service and safety I know they deserve? I shouldn't be driving kids around when I'm not at my best. The kids' safety is too important.

But because I don't have sick paid days, I don't have a choice: I end up at work, sick or not.

Last December, my son and eldest daughter were sick with "swine flu." I was scared and helpless. I had no choice but to take time off from work to care for my kids, who are also diabetic.

But just as they recovered, I was infected with the swine flu. I had already lost a week's pay and because First Student does not offer paid sick days, I had to drag myself to work.

For more than a week, I drove a school bus while I suffered from the swine flu. I did everything I could to keep the students from catching the virus; I washed my hands at every chance I got, and constantly wiped down my bus with Lysol wipes to keep it clean.

Thank goodness none of the kids on my bus caught the swine flu.

Nobody should have to go to work sick. And nobody should have to choose between their kids, their job, and the people they serve. In this economy, working families don't have a choice -- no one I know can afford to miss pay, never mind risk getting fired.

Working people need paid sick days. Please support **SB 63 AN ACT MANDATING EMPLOYERS PROVIDE PAID SICK LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES.**

Thank you.

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