

Cheryl Folston, Newington, CT
Testimony in SUPPORT of SB-913

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To Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and the members of the Labor Committee:

Hello, my name is Cheryl Folston and I live in Newington, Connecticut. Thank you for giving me a chance to share my story today.

I'm here today because working a job without paid sick days nearly cost me my life.

I was working as a driver for a livery service. I drove special needs students to school and I drove patients to an eye surgery clinic. The pay wasn't great and there was no health insurance, but it was a job. I worked there for five years, but I never got a paid sick day.

That meant, sick or not, I went into work. Even if I had a cold or a flu or a stomach bug, I would be driving sick patients to the hospital and driving special needs kids to school. I couldn't afford to stay home. Because of bad credit and a past eviction, I can't get a lease on an apartment, so I live at a motel that charges by the week. I couldn't afford to miss even a day's pay.

I hadn't been to the doctor in years, but I never had the chance to take a day off, or even a few hours off, to see a doctor.

In the summer, I was laid off from my job. I didn't know how I would make ends meet. But at least I had a chance to see a doctor. When I went in, he told me I had a serious heart tumor, and if I waited any longer to get medical attention, it could have killed me.

I had heart surgery in December, and I'm still recovering from it. My doctor tell me I'm almost recovered enough to start looking for work again. I hope I can find a job. I hope my next job provides paid sick days.

No one should have to work without even a single paid sick day. Even the lowliest workers deserve to be treated like human beings. Some people's pets get better medical care than people.

We all get sick sometimes. And if you have paid sick days already, maybe you take them for granted. But when I didn't have paid sick days, it almost cost me my life. Is it too much to ask employers to give a few hours to allow people like me to get the medical attention they need?

It simply isn't right, and it isn't healthy. It has to change.

I want to thank Governor Dan Malloy for his leadership and his support for paid sick days legislation. I'm here today to ask the legislature to pass the paid sick days bill right away.

Thank you,
Cheryl Folston