

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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Labor and Public Employees Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **S.B. 913 (RAISED) AN ACT MANDATING EMPLOYERS PROVIDE PAID SICK LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES**

Chairmen Prague and Zalaski;

Distinguished Chairmen and Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, the Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and their membership urge you to not support S.B. 913 and its unfunded mandate on businesses for paid sick leave. Connecticut is an at-will state which allows an employee or an employer to terminate employment with no liability. There are also statutory mandates that have been put in place over the years to include a minimum wage for employees in excess of the federal guidelines. Businesses must be allowed to make their own decisions on employee benefits.

In today's economy the focus should be on saving jobs, not putting additional, costly requirements on businesses and putting existing jobs in peril. Surviving businesses today have all they can do to make ends meet; many have closed their doors or reduced their work force significantly. If they have maintained their employee bases they are very fortunate. Additional mandates on an employer will, without doubt, cause some to reduce employees to a level below the mandated threshold. It should be noted that this iteration of the paid sick leave bill has a threshold of fifty employees but would be applicable to all types of businesses, despite the fact that even larger businesses can be significantly impacted if key employees are away from work without proper notice or warnings.

Increased minimum wages, mandated paid sick or personal leave time, or mandated primary health care certainly will benefit an employee and may encourage them to gravitate to or remain with, a generous business owner. Not all businesses can afford to provide these employee benefits and stay in business. There are a certain number of minimum wage businesses that have a place in society and they need a supply of minimum wage employees to meet their business plans. Without these employees or if the mandates on the employers were to be increased, these businesses would not succeed and the products and services they provide would no longer be available.

We urge you to not support proposed S.B. 913 (RAISED) AN ACT MANDATING EMPLOYERS PROVIDE PAID SICK LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES. This is not the time in the present economy to raise the costs and burdens on employers and businesses. They have all they can do to stay in business and support the workforce that they have. Additional requirements at this time would be inappropriate. We would be pleased to discuss this at any time. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John S. Johnson
Legislative Chair

Grant W. Westerson
President