

# Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association

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[www.chcca.net](http://www.chcca.net)

MEMBERS OF: CBIA -- NFPA -- ICC

Established 1972



TESTIMONY OF  
JENNIFER JENNINGS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
BEFORE THE  
LABOR COMMITTEE  
MARCH 1, 2011

9/13

2011

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The Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association (CHCC) submits the following comments opposing SB-913, An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees:

Our members generally provide heating and cooling services in the residential market, which has slowed down considerably due to the economy. This is the sixth straight year that permits for new home construction have declined. Renovations and remodeling projects have also slowed down due to the economy. The same holds true for the commercial sector as well.

Although some of our members have fewer than 50 employees, we are very concerned that the bill imposes a burdensome workplace mandate on employers that will ultimately be extended to even the smallest employers. This poses particular concerns for our industry.

Many heating and cooling companies invest significant time and resources into training apprentices. Beginning apprentices generally don't have the skills to contribute significantly to the job. Each apprentice on the job site also has to be closely supervised by a licensed journeyman. Employers are also required to pay apprentices good wages with built-in increases, which are subject to the approval of the state Department of Labor. Adding the cost of paid family leave on top of other apprenticeship training costs may discourage employers from providing apprentices with hands-on training opportunities.

In addition, mandating paid leave days for employees on prevailing wage jobs is duplicative and would result in benefits available to workers on top of prevailing wage benefits. The prevailing rate is required by law to include a base rate and a fringe benefit rate which may be paid in cash or benefits.

The cyclical nature of the construction industry also makes a one-size-fits-all sick leave mandate particularly burdensome. In the construction industry, workers are sometimes hired to perform work for a limited duration on a particular job. Contractors that bid on construction projects have to have some certainty as to what their labor costs will be in order to accurately bid the project and meet project deadlines. If workers are out sick, replacements need to be hired to keep the job on track. Consequently, the construction trades, including union shops, generally institute "No Show, No Pay" policies.

For these reasons, we ask you to please **REJECT SB-913**.

*CHCC is a trade association whose objectives are to strengthen and further trade relations, attract, educate and train necessary manpower, represent members at all levels of government and review and establish quality standards and procedures. The association represents over 125 Heating & Cooling Companies in Connecticut.*