

To the Committee for Labor and Public Employees
SUPPORT for SB 913, Paid Sick Days

913

My name is Joel Cruz. I am a resident of Hartford Connecticut. I am a minister and a veteran and currently work in the healthcare industry at the Charter Oak Community Health Center in Hartford.

The issue of paid sick days is important to me on a personal level because I think it is a basic issue of fairness and treating people with respect. No one should have to choose between their health and the job. To me this is what the term "family values" is all about.

In addition, as someone who works in the healthcare industry I know how important it is for individuals to get timely treatment for their illnesses. Not having paid sick days is one more barrier that can discourage individuals from getting timely medical care. For individuals with chronic medical conditions, this can be especially harmful and costly.

One example is asthma. Hartford has one of the highest rates of childhood asthma in the country. But many parents do not have the flexibility in their work schedule that would allow them to bring their children to regular primary care appointments for treatment and management of their child's asthma condition. What happens to these children? Their condition gets worse because they are not getting regular care and they end up in the emergency room. That is bad for their health, and costly for all of us.

Ensuring access to paid sick days for low-wage employees is important for ensuring access to quality healthcare services for this population.

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