



Hispanic Health Council

March 1, 2011

Labor and Public Employees Committee Testimony

Re: SB 913, AA Mandating Employers to Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees

Jose Ortiz, President and CEO, Hispanic Health Council

Honorable members of the committee, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to address SB 913.

I respectfully ask each of you to recall the last time you went for your annual physical, a dental cleaning or perhaps your yearly mammogram. I am guessing the appointment took place sometime during your work day and you were able to get away from your desk long enough to take care of this important preventive appointment. Now, imagine that your job did not offer paid sick time. Imagine you faced lost wages, or worse a reprimand, or even being fired, for leaving work to take care of your health. This is the plight faced by too many Connecticut residents whose employers deny them paid sick leave.

At the Hispanic Health Council, our 75 full-time employees are allowed to accrue the equivalent of five days of sick time per year. Consistent with the bill now before you, they are allowed to use these days when they or their children are sick, for preventive care, and for appointments to diagnose and treat a health condition.

Instead of being costly to our non-profit agency, which has an annual budget of \$4.7 million a year, we believe that this benefit saves money by keeping our employees healthy. Offering paid sick time also can increase productivity by preventing illness from spreading through the work place and exponentially increasing absenteeism.

Offering paid sick time is the right thing to do both from an employee's and a business leader's point of view. I urge you to pass this important legislation.

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