

Testimony from Kyle Warner
Plainville, CT
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913

Committee on Labor and Public Employees in support of Senate ~~Bill 913~~ for Paid Sick Days.

As a Connecticut worker who has seen the effects of not offering paid sick leave, I am in support of Senate Bill 913 for paid sick days. I held a position as a dietary aide at a nursing home. This is one of the last places we want sick employees roaming the halls.

A nursing home is full of vulnerable people who cannot risk getting infected. As a dietary aide we prepared meals for the residents. The likelihood of a worker's illness transferring to a resident is high when dealing with their food. This is why there was a zero tolerance policy for sick workers. If you were sick you could not work. The employee did not have the option of dealing with their cold and working for the needed money. Working sick was too much of a risk and would lead to an early dismissal if found to be sick at work. Depending on the severity of your illness, extra time would need to be taken off to make sure that there was no chance of being contagious. Unfortunately, there is always a few employees who can hide being sick enough to get through the day, this is good for nobody.

Should we really be putting people in this situation? People get sick, it cannot be avoided. Do we tell people that they are going to have to deal with the loss of money? Many individuals at least have the chance to fight through sickness at work to preserve that pay. Employees at nursing homes are not that fortunate. Where are we as a society that the rights and well-being of workers is so disregarded?

A modest amount of paid sick time would put an end to these problems. It is extremely unfortunate that we have no basic standards for the workforce in this country. Kuwait mandates 10 paid days off a year; I think a mere 5 is more than reasonable? I urge you to support this legislation; it is the right thing to do for Connecticut.