

913

Larry Deutsch, MD, MPH

Testimony in support of SB. 913 - AA MANDATING EMPLOYERS PROVIDE PAID SICK LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES

Thank you to the members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee for the opportunity to present testimony from the perspective of a public health professional and pediatrician.

Paid sick days are essential for the health of working parents and their children. Yes: paid sick days are essential for health -- of individuals, their co-workers, and their families.

Children – and, for that matter, older family adults who may be dependent on the working person now in the middle - are denied care without paid sick days to take care of medical needs. The parent of a child – or the working child of an elderly parent – who has no paid sick days cannot miss work help with wellness or urgent primary care for themselves or their dependents. There develop worse health outcomes and greater costs throughout the healthcare system generally.

When an employee lack paid sick days, their families unfairly suffer for it. This could be lack of regular care with vaccinations and so on up to timely and necessary visits related to illness, recovery, and return to work. Especially for those families with lower income and chronic health needs, preventive and timely urgent care is essential for all -- young, working, or old.

Paid sick days are vital for parents to get their children to the appointments and treatment they need. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, over a quarter of parents of children with asthma have missed at least one child's medical appointments because they could not get time off work.

Let's remember also: lack of paid sick days for employees also raises the transmission of illnesses like flu that can easily be transmitted to co-workers, you, me, and anyone in public places like restaurants and offices and schools and factories and stores and banks and busses.

In conclusion, when employees are not guaranteed a number of paid sick days, they themselves, their families with young or old, and the general public health all suffer. In the end, its more expensive and inefficient – and this is recognized by many businesses large and small, doctors, medical societies – as well as many city, state, and federal governments

I stand in strong support of finally passing SB 913.

Thank you.

Dr. Larry Deutsch  
35 Torwood Street  
Hartford CT 06114