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Testimony IN SUPPORT of S.B. 913 State of CT

March 1, 2011

My name is Margot Dorfman and I am the CEO of the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce. I support S.B. 913, which would allow employees in Connecticut to accrue and use paid sick leave.

The U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce was founded to support the continued economic advancement of women. We are both a product as well as a part of the great Civil Rights Movement. The Women's Chamber has over 500,000 members – young and old, students and retirees, employees and business owners.

Like the recent debates over health care, equal pay, and financial reform, the issue of paid sick days cannot be painted as a clear cut struggle between business owners and the labor force. We must recognize and appreciate that we have a 21st century workforce in which women have advanced in the workforce and in which families must value the often competing needs of work and family. Paid sick days are one important tool to help workers balance these needs, as well as to stay healthy and productive.

Just as the minimum wage sets a basic standard for wages, setting a minimum standard for paid sick days makes sense. Just as it is important for a law that would provide for equal pay for equal work in order to level the playing field, it is important to set a basic floor to allow businesses who offer paid sick days to fairly compete. Without such a law, businesses who already do the right thing are unfairly disadvantaged.

Paid sick days are an investment in our families, our workforce, and our health that we cannot afford to do without. I urge you to pass S.B. 913 to ensure fairness and health for both businesses and workers.

Respectfully submitted,

Margot Dorfman