

Testimony regarding SB 913

By the Rev Joel S Neubauer

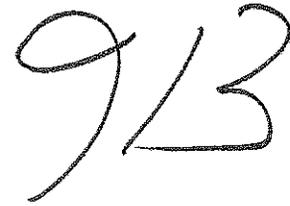
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To the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly:

The relationships I hold with neighbors as a pastor, volunteer and tax-paying homeowner in Middlesex County consistently point to the needs of our statewide community to support the healthy, industrious lives we lead as interconnected individuals. Because of the witness of these relationships, I support SB 913 in its aim to provide the low-cost benefit of paid sick leave to employees of Connecticut businesses.

The witness of my faith and of the social sciences both point to the almost universal desire of humans to be engaged in meaningful, productive relationships. While some might fear that mandated paid sick leave could be misused, a stronger possibility would point to a highlighted respect for health and wellness within the workplace by both employers and employees that would increase businesses' efficiency and output. Workers who are rightfully supported in properly maintaining health, in my experience, display the greatest dedication to their workplace commitments.

The benefit of economic respect for workers' health in the form of paid sick leave is both individual and communal: workers are individually guided to maintain their most productive levels of ability and are encouraged to remain within a competitive business setting wherein their health is valued; likewise, paid sick leave for individuals advocates for the continued health and productivity of co-workers who are freed from the fear of contracting illness.

We know that workplace benefits – such as paid sick leave – are valued by employers and employees by the exceptional leave and health packages of Connecticut business executives. The respect and support for wellness our companies provide their higher-ups seems to indicate that health is a priority value to those who are invested in Connecticut commerce and industry. Extending this simple and affordable benefit of paid sick leave to all Connecticut employees, as provided by SB 913, would only further invest workers in their greatest productivity. And because it is no secret that this bill will, when passed, disproportionately extend benefits to the economically poorest of our co-citizens, we can also be proud of the benefit of an increased social justice demonstrated by our state's governing bodies.

For its ability to broadcast Connecticut's commitment to the respect we hold for workers' health and wellness; for its benefit of adding a competitive edge to our businesses against other regional employers; for its protection of the wider public by allowing physically sick workers to heal without fear of retribution; and for its extension of justice to hard-working Connecticut citizens: I support this bill's enactment and look for Governor Malloy to quickly bring it into law.

In faithful and expectant peace,

Pastor Joel S Neubauer