

913

New England Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
20 Upland St.
Worcester, MA 01607

TO: Committee on Labor and Public Employees
The State House, Capitol Building
Hartford, CT 06106

February 20, 2011

RE: Pending Legislation with regard to paid sick leave
Supporting SB 913

To Whom It May Concern:

In the State of Connecticut, there are more than 40,000 members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in more than 60 congregations. Our members represent a diversity of age, ethnicity and economic circumstance. Many are workers in small enterprises, factories or retail locations. Some of us are business owners, professionals or managers. In these troubling times, some of us are underemployed or unemployed. All of us share something in common, however, a core value. Our congregations bear witness to a long-standing ethic of being places for moral and ethical deliberation and we encourage members to offer testimony in the public square, informed by tradition, scholarly debate and scriptural integrity. We are called upon to follow Jesus in insisting on justice, not on our own behalf, but on behalf of our neighbor(s).

Therefore we stand for proposed legislation that would provide paid sick leave for workers, and we would reject provisions that separate classes of workers depriving lower paid workers from such benefits. Legislation that would marginalize or penalize an otherwise conscientious worker or cause their dismissal from employment because of an unfortunate illness, unplanned family disturbance or abuse by a family member is unjust. We therefore encourage the Legislature in the State of Connecticut to enact provisions that provide for paid time to all classes of employees.

Yours in the Gospel,

The Rev. Margaret G. Payne
Bishop