

CONNECTICUT  
*Restaurant*  
ASSOCIATION

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**Connecticut Restaurant Association Testimony  
Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee  
March 1, 2011**

**SB 913 An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees**

The Connecticut Restaurant Association represents over 600 restaurants and hospitality industry businesses across Connecticut. We support government initiatives that help create a strong business climate, create new jobs, promote a vibrant state economy, and restrict government interference in the daily conduct of our businesses. We believe that lower taxes, pro-business legislation and reasonable regulations support our businesses' ability to prosper and make Connecticut more desirable for future business growth.

The Connecticut Restaurant Association strongly opposes SB 913. Mandating Connecticut employers to provide paid sick leave to full and part time employees is an extremely costly measure that will result in fewer jobs and even less job growth in an already struggling economy. Even in better economic times, not all businesses can afford the expense of paying employees who do not come to work. This is not indicative of the business owner's lack of concern for his/her employees, but rather the reality of owning a small business.

The restaurant industry already offers flexibility to its employees. We provide flexible work schedules and hours that meet the needs of both the workplace and our employees. If this proposal becomes law, restaurants will be forced to double pay for a shift when an employee calls in sick. We will have to pay them for the day off, as well as pay their replacement to cover that shift. It is a cost that is simply unaffordable.

Mandates such as mandatory paid sick leave hit small businesses especially hard. Restaurants earn roughly four cents in profit on every \$1 in sales. These are tight margins. Restaurants cannot pass this cost on to customers. Increased costs would have to be recouped elsewhere.

Connecticut's Restaurants provide jobs to over 145,000 people. We recognize the value of their contributions to our businesses, and will continue to be good employers and do as much as we can to provide the best possible working environment. However, the decisions about their benefits package must remain those of the business owner.

We urge you to reject this proposal. Thank you for your consideration.