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February 24, 2011

Members of the Legislature's Labor and Public Employees Committee

RE: Reject SB 913: Mandatory paid Time Off

Dear Members:

My name is Joseph Mascia and I am the Executive Director of GIL Foundation, Incorporated. GIL is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing comprehensive supports and services to community residents with developmental disabilities in Connecticut since 1985. GIL is a long-standing member of the Connecticut Association of Nonprofits.

I have been following Bill SB 913 and would like to strongly advise all Committee Members to reject this proposal. An act *mandating* employers to provide paid sick leave to their employees will be damaging to our nonprofit operations. This legislation if passed would dictate what an organization must do without the history, context, and financial position of the agency. GIL, like other organizations conducting business in tough economic times have moved to a *paid time off bank system* in an effort to better recruit and retain quality workers. This method of accruing time off has become a widely used strategy nationally with both employee and employer returns. A WorldatWork research report, *Paid Time Off Programs and Practices*, highlights key benchmarks regarding paid-time-off (PTO) practices in the U.S:

- A majority offer paid time off as a key employee benefit when attracting new employees.
- A vast majority of employers (all organizations with a PTO bank system and 87 percent with a traditional system) provide paid sick leave already.
- The average number of paid sick days in a traditional system is 9. PTO bank systems do not distinguish between vacation and sick time thus allowing more access to sick time.

Therefore our policies already promote less restrictive paid time off and places fewer burdens upon managers to staff for unprepared absences. In fact, our policies do not limit needed sick time, but actually averts the need to force employees to use "sick time" as a substitute for other earned time. The result is that sick time is more liberally imbedded in time off banks and utilized as needed – when an individual is not well and must take time off due to illness. In short, the major benefit for the employer is that people are less likely to call in sick unless they really are (because they won't want to sacrifice a vacation day), which means you're less likely to get stuck shorthanded for needed coverage.

If SB 913 was successfully passed it would place undue hardship on many employers like GIL Foundation requiring 24-hour care and services for individuals with developmental needs. GIL would be forced to remove the successful paid time off bank system, reverting back to old systems of time off accrual, hindering progress in recruiting and retention of valuable employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph A Mascia".

Joseph A Mascia
Executive Director
mascia@gilfoundation.com