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**STATEMENT REGARDING**  
**Senate Bill 913: AA Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave to Employees**

**Labor Committee**  
**March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011**

The MetroHartford Alliance is the region's economic development leader and Hartford's Chamber of Commerce. Our investors include businesses of all sizes, health care providers, institutions of higher education, and regional municipalities. Although diverse, all of these investors share a common interest in the full economic recovery of our state supported by the attraction and retention of jobs, capital and talent.

While we continue to face such extreme fiscal challenges, we urge the legislature to make Connecticut's economic recovery its top and only priority. Consider the facts:

- Currently, Connecticut has the highest deficit per capita in the entire nation compounded by the highest bonded indebtedness.
- We are facing deficits in the next biennium that exceed \$7B, while unfunded public retiree pensions and healthcare hover around \$40B.

Given these enormous obstacles to growth, any legislation that is irrelevant to the vital work that is being done to balance the state budget should be postponed until the state is on solid financial ground. In fact, any legislation that exacerbates these conditions by making our state *less* competitive should be rejected on arrival by anyone who truly wishes to create jobs in Connecticut.

At this time, even considering legislation like Senate Bill 913 makes Connecticut less competitive in a highly volatile marketplace. By proposing this legislation

and attempting to be the first state in the nation to have such a mandate, the legislature is sending a message to Connecticut's existing employers that we are not a friendly place for them to remain or expand. The reality needs to be quite the opposite.

At this time of intense global competition for jobs, capital and talent, we cannot overstate the importance of sending a pro-growth message to incumbent businesses considering expansion as well as those looking to relocate. Increasing business costs by adding labor mandates is the last thing we should consider. For an employer of 50 workers at \$10 per hour working 40 hours per week (52 weeks per year) the total increased cost of implementing this bill would be approximately \$26,000 per year. In fact, the cost of this legislation was confirmed in past years when state, municipal and certain state university system employees were exempted due to fiscal impact. Compounded by the existing high cost of doing business in our state, this legislation effectively closes the door to job growth and retention.

As an economic development organization and the capital city's chamber of commerce, we ask you to work with us to help Connecticut stand out as a *premier* place to do business and create jobs, and take steps to help us strengthen our economy for future growth, not weaken it further. Focusing instead on controlled spending and addressing our budget deficits is critical to our ability to retain and attract jobs, and this must be our top priority.

For all of these reasons, we urge the defeat of Senate Bill 913.