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Testimony regarding SB 913

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As a resident of Litchfield County, parish pastor and ministry specialist, as a husband, taxpayer and neighbor, I stand in favor of SB 913, a bill which would provide a low-cost benefit to employees of Connecticut businesses. Some might say that this bill could provide an incentive for workers to abuse sick time, but my experience is that workers want the business in which they invest skill, time and labor to flourish, and that this bill would encourage them to continue this investment while dealing with issues which may preclude work on occasion. Unforeseen family issues, health dilemmas or domestic violence should not be the occasion for the dismissal of an otherwise productive worker.

When this benefit would be used, other workers or their supervisors would have to devote more time to the tasks of productivity, sales or marketing. This kind of teamwork is encouraged by the ethic of our church. We support and encourage each other and contribute what we have toward the good of all. Our social statements and indeed the scriptures teach us this way of life, and we would be remiss not to encourage our legislators to mandate such a benefit. Indeed it seems that this kind of benefit for hourly or salaried workers would instill loyalty to the enterprise and its management.

In my experience, upper level management generally has long enjoyed the benefit of paid leave, extended vacation time and other generous benefits. Our stand on economic justice is clear: such benefits must extend to all employees as we "bear one another's burdens." The enactment of this legislation would mandate such sharing, without a large financial burden placed on the business. It is my stand that this would provide an edge to Connecticut businesses. Thus, I support its enactment by the legislature and encourage Governor Malloy to sign it into law.