

Testimony of Sandy Reigal, Hartford Paraprofessional

Labor and Public Employees Committee

March 1, 2012

S.B. 150 AN ACT CONCERNING FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski, and members of the Labor Committee. My name is Sandy Reigal. I am here to testify for the FMLA Bill on the floor. I am a Hartford paraprofessional. Well, I was for 33 years, until I had to take a medical retirement on December 9th. February 1st would have been my 34th anniversary of doing a job I loved with all my heart and soul.

I was gravely ill in April of last year. I spent 7 weeks at Hartford Hospital, the first 4 1/2 weeks of which I have no recollection of. The doctors told my family I might not make it. My daughter had to confer with doctors as to my treatment and make very important decisions for me, because I couldn't.

Fortunately, for 33 years, I had accumulated a good bank of sick time to get me through my situation. Many paras now are of much shorter time in the system and don't have sick time built up. It could be any of their close family members, or, the paras themselves, involved in this type of dilemma.

Yes, they receive no pay for this time, but at least their jobs would not be in jeopardy. Since paras are ten month positions, I feel strongly that the required hours should and must, be reduced, to protect them.

I am very sad to not be working with my students, and I need to see this bill passed before any more are in my situation.

Thank You for your support,
Sandra L. Reigal
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