

To Whom it may Concern:

I manage a publishing plant in Cromwell, CT where we employ over 70 people in the state, and have 35 others who report to the office from around New England. Our employees enjoy top of the scale pay, health benefits, sick/well time, vacation time, and a climate controlled environment. The skills range from entry-level shipping and light production, to professional printing press operators, administrators, and management.

We support Senator Doyle's Raised Bill No. 152 concerning One Day equaling One Absence. In our industry, we rely on our employees to handle time sensitive tasks. A missed day cannot be recovered; it is lost revenue or lost productivity in an industry with razor thin margins and tight deadlines. We schedule around planned vacations and can work with brief unplanned absence due to illness or family issues when we are notified of the absence.

I contacted Senator Doyle following a labor hearing regarding one of our former employees. The individual was absent with no call to us for 4 days; our policy is that a no call/no show for 3 days will result in termination of employment. We attempted to contact the employee and received no return calls, and pursuant to our company policy, terminated the employment relationship as of the fourth day. At the unemployment hearing, we testified that the employee had an 8 year history with our company and during that time had proven an ability to do the work assigned. We also testified that the job was still open and that the employee could return to work following FMLA protocol. The hearing officer found that while our policy of 3 days no show/no call was a sound policy, it was not consistent with CT State Statute as it defines an "occurrence."

As an individual taxpayer, I am appalled that the officer found in favor of an individual who can work, but who chooses not to. I pay a higher tax rate in 2011 than I did in 2010 on purchases and on my income. As a manager of a business in CT, I was assessed a fee on top of unemployment compensation to cover interest to the Federal Government on money the State borrowed to fund unemployment. My employment record is tarnished by this finding, which may result in further increases in our unemployment compensation rate. I am told that my policy is sound, but that the individual would need to miss 5 days to have 3 "occurrences." And I have a job available for the individual, who might now collect benefits for up to 99 weeks.

I believe employees need the protection of the State in certain circumstances. However, we are a Connecticut employer who stands ready to support through its health and wellness policies any employee circumstance. We expect in return only that the employee simply show up, or let us know they cannot.

"One absence equals one occurrence" provides adequate protection for the employee, while allowing businesses to manage our workloads.

Sincerely,

Tim Potrikus, Vice President
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