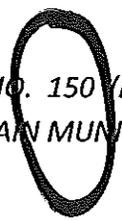


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**LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE HEARING 3/1/2012**



*S.B. NO. 150 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES.*

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and the members of the committee:

My name is Christine Smith, I'm a resident of Manchester and I am here today to speak about S.B. No. 150- An act concerning family and medical leave benefits for certain municipal employees.

I am in favor of this bill. I've been a proud Hartford Paraprofessional for over 15 years and being a part of a team of educators. On Saturday, February 11, 2012, I was supposed to testify on behalf of paraprofessionals and our importance in education and educating our children. Due to a family situation I was unable to attend. While my main concern and focus was toward my son, I couldn't help but feel relieved that this happened on a weekend and he didn't have an extended stay. Even though, as of right now I have a sufficient amount of sick time to utilize if needed, but what if I didn't? I would be walking in the same shoes that other paras have walked in before me. I believe most of us try balancing our professional lives with our personal lives and this bill will give us the opportunity to have more employment stability. When faced with unexpected events and medical emergencies the last thing that anyone needs to worry about is if their job will still be there when they return.

I work diligently as well as several paraprofessionals. The passing of this bill would make it a lot easier for those who may need the time to look after a loved one and may not have accumulated sick time available for one reason or another. It will allow us to be one step closer to receiving more recognition that we are part of "The Team"

We as paraprofessionals deserve this benefit. Please support S.B. 150.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Smith

(Paraprofessional)