



INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH
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Testimony of Claudia Williams
Before the Commerce Committee Leadership
Regarding H.B. No. 5269
Institute for Women's Policy Research
February 26, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to address the question of how the “Act Creating Parity between Paid Sick Leave Benefits and Other Employer Provided Benefits” would affect employers, workers, families, and the general public in Connecticut. The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialog, and strengthen families, communities, and societies.

Access to paid sick leave promotes healthy work environments by reducing the spread of illnesses,¹ increasing productivity,² and supporting work and family balance.³ Paid sick leave allows people to take time off work to recover from personal illnesses and to tend to family members' health without the fear of lost pay or other negative consequences. In addition, the economic and public health benefits of earned sick leave coverage are substantial, and are well documented, including stronger, safer work environments; increased productivity; reduced turnover costs; and reduced health care costs.⁴

Bill H.B. No. 5269, currently being considered by the Connecticut legislature, would reduce access to paid sick leave, which research suggests would have negative impact on the economy and well-being of the state population. This bill would exempt manufacturers entirely as long as their business is primarily engaged in activities that fall under NAICS's manufacturing categories; this would mean that workers who serve clerical or administrative functions in one industry would be treated differently than workers with the same job responsibilities in other industry.

The current law requires that service workers earn paid sick leave if the business they work for employs at least 50 people in Connecticut during any quarter of the previous year. Changing the policy such that an establishment is considered a small employer by measuring only a specific week during the year instead of during any quarter, would create potential to miscategorize employers. Evaluation of paid sick leave policies find that the policies have few, if any, negative effects in generating profits, attracting the most talented workforce, and creating jobs. Evidence from jurisdictions that have passed paid sick leave ordinances, including Connecticut, have all been positive.

⁶ Drago, Robert and Vicky Lovell. 2011. *San Francisco's Paid Sick Leave Ordinance: Outcomes for Employers and Employees*. IWPR Report #A138. Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research. <<http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/San-Fran-PSD>> (accessed February 26, 2013)

⁷ *Seattle Met*. "Study: San Francisco Restaurants Support Paid Sick Leave." Calkins, Andrew. May 9, 2011. <<http://www.seattlemet.com/news-and-profiles/publicola/articles/study-san-francisco-restaurants-support-paid-sick-leave>> (accessed February 26, 2013).

⁸ Branche, Yolanda. 2013. Audit of the Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act of 2008. Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

⁹ The Main Street Alliance of Washington. 2013. *Paid Sick Days and the Seattle Economy: Job growth and business formation at the 1-year anniversary of Seattle's Paid Sick and Safe Leave law*