

**Testimony of Susan Lloyd Yolen, Vice President, Public Policy & Advocacy,
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
Regarding Raised Bill 5238,
An Act Concerning Expansion of Family and Medical Leave.
Labor and Public Employees Committee
February 27, 2014**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment today on Raised Bill 5238.

Planned Parenthood of Southern New England is the largest provider of family planning and reproductive health care in Connecticut, operating 17 health centers across Connecticut. As a health provider with firsthand experience caring for patients balancing multiple pressing family needs with their own health priorities, Planned Parenthood of Southern New England has joined the CT Campaign for Family Values at Work. We would like to express strong support for the expansion of the list of family members for whom an employee may take family or medical leave, and the passage of Raised Bill 5238.

Clearly, Connecticut's family structures have become as diverse as the culture of our state. It is certainly a "family value" shared by many of us, that when appropriate and necessary, family members should be able to step in to care for one another in the event of illness. Adding parents-in-law, siblings, grandparents or grandchildren to the list of family members for whom an employee may take leave under the statute, reflects the fact that our state's demographics continue to result in many more elderly state residents with relatives responsible for providing some or all of their care.

Others who testify on this legislation will provide data regarding the estimated number of working caregivers in our state, as well as estimates of hours of care provided within family units. We know this to be many millions of uncompensated hours provided by individuals who, themselves, are often over age 50. Not surprisingly, a majority of these caregivers are women.

Understanding how important jobs are to family stability, we urge you to adopt this language. No one should be forced to sacrifice employment for the care of a loved one. Planned Parenthood is also eagerly following the work of the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Task Force convened by the PCSW, and we support establishment of a paid family and medical leave insurance system being studied currently by that task force.