

My name is Ellen Maloney and I live in West Haven. I have worked as a nanny for 20 years. I am submitting this written testimony in support of HB 5527, the Connecticut Domestic Worker Bill of Rights.

I have worked for a total of seven families in the New Haven area, caring for children of all ages, from infants to teenagers. During this time, my work responsibilities have expanded to include elder care (for the aging family members of my employers), taking my charges to physical therapy sessions and doctor visits, working at family gatherings and parties, housecleaning, laundry, and paying bills and taxes. I have become a surrogate mother figure to the kids when they are sick or have had a social crisis in their interactions with other kids at schools. I've supervised playdates, and coordinated with the parents of the kids' friends. I've interacted with contractors about home repairs. I've taken my employers' pets to the veterinarian. And I've had to be on-call and available to take care of the kids during snow days or to pick them up when they get sick at school. I have lived with unexpected demands on my time.

When one of the children I cared for developed a life-threatening illness, I also took on responsibility for some aspects of her medical care.

The work is gratifying because I provide services for people who need help with things they can't do because of their work schedules. I have an ongoing and never-ending relationship with the children I've cared for. I will always be a part of their families and their lives. Even after I've stopped working for the family, I'm still a part of the kids' lives.

Despite the close relationships I have developed, I believe some aspects of the work relationship between employers and their workers should be improved. I support the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights because it will strengthen protections for workers to address the problems I and other domestic workers have experienced.

The most important improvement I would like to see is to require employers to give workers a written statement of work duties, schedule and hours, and her pay, including extra pay for taking on additional work and for work outside the normal schedule. I believe my employers should update my pay scale to reflect the duties I take on, on top of providing childcare. Having written notice of the duties I'm expected to perform, including extra pay for adding duties to my workload, and notice of my hours and schedule, would be a huge improvement to my working conditions. I have also had problems when my employers ask me to run errands outside my normal working hours and do not pay me extra for this work time.

I also support the proposed change to require employers to get written agreement from a worker to work on her normal day off. I have been asked to come to do work on the weekend. My employers have asked me to work extra on a weekend and then cancelled at the last

minute. Having clarity on my schedule and requiring the worker's agreement to work on the seventh day of the week would help prevent this from happening.

Once when I accompanied my employers on vacation, I did not receive any pay at all. My employers told me that since they were covering the cost of my hotel, meals and entertainment, they would not be paying me my normal wages. I believe that if you're going to work and providing a service you should not only be paid for your work but for your hotel and meals as well. Domestic workers need and deserve greater protections from these kinds of deductions from pay.

I also support the creation of a Domestic Work Taskforce. The Taskforce would make it clear in black and white that workers have rights and employers have responsibilities.

I ask you to please vote in favor of the Connecticut Domestic Worker Bill of Rights, HB 5527.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ellen Maloney

March 12, 2014