

March 5th, 2015

Testimony in support of HB 6932 for Paid Family and Medical Leave

To Representative Tercyak, Senator Gomes and members of the Labor Committee:

My name is Rachelle Chevalier and I am a teacher at a daycare called Stork Club, Inc. I have been working for this company for about 3 years and I thoroughly enjoy my job and I love working with kids.

Not too long ago, my father suddenly became very ill and was diagnosed with Bells Palsy. Bells Palsy is a paralysis or weakness of the muscles on one side of the face. Some of the symptoms include drooling, ability to taste, and numbness to the one side of the face and as well as increased sensitivity to sound just to list a few. My mom and I had to take on the responsibility of taking care of my dad and nursing him back to health. While I did this, I had to cut my hours at the daycare to tend to my sick father. I was happy to help my mom and take care of my father but less hours at work meant less money in my paycheck. My student loans, car payment and other bills started to pile up. It was a very difficult time for my family and the financial burden just added to our stress. Overtime my father's health got better and I was able to start back working my normal schedule at the daycare while my mom stayed home with my dad. I was eventually able to catch up on my bills, loans and car payments and was able to get into the swing of things which was a great relief. But it was a struggle for a long time.

If Connecticut already had a paid family and medical leave program in place when my family went through this ordeal, I would have been able to take the necessary time to take care of my father without having to worry about all the bills that I am responsible for paying. Taking care of my family is a top priority and it should not feel like a financial strain or burden. Life is always going to have ups and downs. Families regularly go through what me and my family went through. We should not be enhancing families' suffering by taking away the economic security that is necessary to take care of our loved ones.

I urge you to pass HB 6932.

Thank you.

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