

March 5, 2015

Testimony for fair scheduling practices, HB6933.

My name is Jasmine Jackson. I live in Hamden and I appear today to speak about fair advance scheduling. Until January, I worked at the Orange location of nationwide fast food chain.

I would like to start by informing you that managers receive their schedules three weeks in advance, so the proposed law requiring 21 day advance scheduling is not impossible to implement nor does it cause any hardship for business. It is simply reserved for management and upper level employees. Lower-wage workers live not only paycheck to paycheck but on a manager's scheduling whim.

Insufficient notice of my schedule has impacted my life. I attempted to enlist in the Airforce. I performed well enough on my tests to qualify for Officers' Training School. Except the recruiter told me that I could not enlist until I made three payments on my student loans.

At work, a schedule came out that had me working enough hours in one week for me to make a payment on my student loans. I was so excited I told everyone about my ability to pay my loans and head to Officers' School.

Then, right before I was to start those hours, the schedule changed and my hours were cut drastically. My plans to pay my loan fell through. As you can see, I am not enrolled in Officers' School right now. There is nothing a worker can do to make an employer give her the hours she was promised but when they are taken from you at the last minute, it is even worse. You find yourself thinking: "If I knew, I would have done this or that." You cannot plan with short notice scheduling.

In early December last year, I requested from my supervisors December 26th off because I would be in New York for Christmas: I gave them three weeks advance notice of my unpaid absence. They issued a schedule one week before Christmas that assigned me to work on the 26th. I pointed out that I had given them notice well in advance and would be traveling on that day. They told me: "Too bad." They scheduled me for the 5:00 PM shift of the restaurant. I warned them every day before I left that I might not be there exactly at 5, but would be there at 5:30 PM as I was traveling with another person. When I appeared at 5:30 that day, I was told by my manager that the staff was considering writing me up for that.

At the very least fair scheduling guidelines will bring some accountability to employers that the workers have no power to do. When I spoke up at work about the scheduling problems, the manager called me and terminated me.

I ask that you support the fair scheduling legislation.

Jasmine Jackson
Hamden