

Testimony of Eric W. Gjede
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Before the Committee on Labor and Public Employees
Hartford, CT
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Testifying in opposition to 6784 An Act Expanding Paid Sick Leave

Good afternoon Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak, Senator Hwang, Representative Rutigliano and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Eric Gjede and I am assistant counsel at the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA), which represents more than 10,000 large and small companies throughout the state of Connecticut.

CBIA opposes the expansion of the paid sick leave mandate proposed in HB 6784.

This bill would double down on the failed paid sick leave law by expanding the mandate to include some of the state's smallest businesses. As I've argued before this committee for the past few years, the inflexibility of the paid sick leave law has resulted in a lot of additional costs and administrative burdens for Connecticut businesses. Further, businesses have realized none of the promised benefits.

Despite claims to the contrary, little evidence exists to support the claim that paid sick leave has decreased illness in the workplace or reduced employee turnover. There is data, however, which suggests the law has resulted in employers cutting hours and other benefits to make up for the increases costs attributable to the paid sick leave law. Even employers that *already* offered some form of paid sick leave have incurred costs to comply with a mandate that was too inflexible to take their existing policies into account.

Expansion of paid sick leave will inhibit small business' ability to compete in every marketplace - whether local, national, or international. When it becomes uncompetitive for employers to do business in Connecticut, they choose to create opportunities in other locations. HB 6784 gives those other places one more advantage over us.

Connecticut is losing businesses and population to other states. They are not leaving here to seek more expansive paid sick leave laws. Connecticut residents are looking for jobs and opportunities and are tired of not being able to find them here.

We urge the committee to stop raising measures that create barriers to success for Connecticut businesses.

Please take no action on HB 6784.