



**MetroHartford Alliance Statement in Opposition to:
S.B. 221 - AN ACT CONCERNING PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE
H.B. 5591 - AN ACT CREATING THE CONNECTICUT RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM**

**Connecticut General Assembly
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 8, 2016**

The MetroHartford Alliance serves as the region's economic development leader and the City of Hartford's Chamber of Commerce. Our investors include businesses of all sizes, health care providers, arts and higher education institutions as well as the municipalities of North Central Connecticut. Our mission is to ensure that the region competes aggressively and successfully for jobs, capital, and talent so that it thrives as one of the country's premier places for all people to live, play, work, and raise a family.

Connecticut's private sector employers generate the jobs and taxes that fund our state's government services and infrastructure investments; policies enacted by the legislature factor significantly in the decision making of these employers. Legislation that will harm our state's employers' ability to compete and succeed should be rejected by anyone committed to creating jobs in Connecticut. For these reasons, the MetroHartford Alliance urges the members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee to oppose S.B. No. 221 - AN ACT CONCERNING PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

S.B. 221 will increase the size and cost of government through the addition of hundreds of new state employees. Further, S.B. 221 significantly expands current Connecticut FMLA laws by requiring even the smallest businesses to continue to providing costly non-wage benefits to an employee that is absent up to 3 months every year.

The MetroHartford Alliance also urges the members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee to oppose H.B. 5591 - AN ACT CREATING THE CONNECTICUT RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM. Connecticut's residents already benefit from a highly competitive marketplace with a variety of retirement products offering low costs and simple administration. H.B. 5591 spends millions of taxpayer dollars launching a plan that would be in direct competition with the private sector and the thousands of Connecticut residents employed in the state's financial services industry today. In lieu of creating a taxpayer funded plan that would help put Connecticut financial services employees out of work, the state should encourage private sector plan coverage and increased awareness through financial literacy education and awareness.

Connecticut is faced with a budget shortfall of as much as \$266 million in the current fiscal year, a nearly \$900 million deficit in FY 2016-17, and projected deficits in excess of \$2 billion in both FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19. As our state struggles with continued massive budget deficits and moderate economic growth, we cannot overstate the importance of sending a pro-growth message to businesses considering investing in or relocating to our state. Making Connecticut's employers less competitive by adding and expanding wage and benefit mandates is the last thing we should consider.

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