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INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

GARY CASTEEL, Secretary-Treasurer

Senate Bill 221 AAC Paid Family and Medical Leave Labor Committee Support

Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and Members of the Labor Committee. My name is Beverley Brakeman. I am the political director for UAW Region 9A. I am here on behalf of our Director, Julie Kushner, and over 8,000 active and retired UAW members living in Connecticut.

We are here to ask your support for the passage of SB 221. The issue of paid family and medical leave is one of great importance to our members. Our members believe that all workers and their families should have paid family and medical leave. It is not only a benefit that allows workers to be better and more productive at work, but it benefits employers who rely on their employees in order to be successful businesses.

In Connecticut, only 11% of private sector and 17% of public sector employees have paid family leave. It is a well-established fact that employees who do not have any kind of paid family leave from their employer, do not take time off when they need it because they cannot afford to. As a result, many lose jobs, wages, productivity and even end up on public assistance. Conversely, workers with paid family or medical leave stay working, have higher wages and have lower rates of public assistance usage.

As for businesses, \$33.6 billion per year is lost in productivity due to the lack of paid family leave for employees. These costs include absenteeism, workday distractions, and reduced hours.

Access to paid family and medical leave allows employees to feel more secure and positive about their employer knowing that if something happens to them or someone in their family they won't have to jeopardize their financial security to take care of their family or themselves.

Please pass this bill. Thank you.