

March 8, 2016

**Testimony to the Committee and Labor and Public Employees in favor of SB221 for paid family and medical leave.**

To the committee:

Our workplace leave policies aren't working.

I support SB 221. We need a Paid Family and Medical Leave program to protect workers and their families

The last Sunday of January, I was with my daughter watching her kids learn to rollerblade in the park when some rowdy dogs knocked me to the ground. I fractured my tibia and badly injured my knee. It happened so quickly, but it's had a huge impact on my life.

I work in commercial horticulture. My job responsibilities include carrying 30-60 pounds of water everywhere, climbing ladders, and climbing up and down all kinds of stairs. Consequently, I will not be able to work for four to six months while I heal and recover.

Paid Family and Medical Leave would be a godsend.

I was lucky in that my employer proved to be very helpful. Even though I had a Silver Tier health plan, it had so many copays, deductibles, not-covereds and quite-low-payout-ceilings, it was going to be beyond unaffordable to get the treatment I needed while I was also not collecting a salary. When I called UCONN, John Dempsey Hospital, to speak with financial aid. they immediately put me onto Husky so that the medical would be covered.

I have applied for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and State Administered General Assistance, which apparently take forever, but I will see. I'm pretty worried about how I am going to pay my bills for the next couple months. It's frustrating to me that I have to rely on the safety net when I have worked my whole life and always been a responsible, dedicated employee. But my employer doesn't provide paid leave so this is my only option.

Please vote for this. Thank you

Lisa Kral  
105 Oakwood Ave  
West Hartford, CT. 06119