

March 8, 2016

Dear members of the Labor Committee,

My name is Tammy Young and I am a resident of Thomaston. I am speaking up today because my family needs paid family and medical leave, and I urge you to pass SB 221.

My brother had a long, terrible battle with cancer and eventually succumbed to it. His wife, with whom he had three sons, could not handle losing her husband and basically split, leaving three young children with my mother and me. I am now one of the legal guardians of my nephews.

I had used all of my sick and vacation time trying to help care for my brother before he passed away. Then one of my nephews became very ill with a condition the doctors could not identify. In retrospect we know it was a virus, because it eventually cleared on its own. But while doctors didn't know what was making him sick, I could not utilize Family and Medical Leave protections because my employer wasn't large enough and so I am covered under the law. Eventually I lost the job.

It is hard for me to accept that employees of smaller companies do not get sick in the same ways that employees of large companies do. All workers, and their families, are human and we all fall victim to the same diseases and injuries.

We should all be protected by equal laws. This is why we need a paid family and medical leave program that truly protects our jobs and gives us some financial stability. I urge you to pass SB 221, and establish a paid family and medical leave program. It would have made a huge difference in caring for my family.

Thank you,

Tammy Young
Thomaston