



Testimony of Eric Gjede
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Before the Committee on Labor and Public Employees
Hartford, CT
March 8, 2018

**Testifying in opposition to
HB 5044: AAC FAIR TREATMENT OF SICK WORKERS**

Good afternoon Senator Gomes, Senator Miner, Representative Porter, Representative Bocchino and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Eric Gjede and I am counsel at the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA), which represents thousands of large and small companies throughout the state of Connecticut.

Since its enactment in 2012, Connecticut's paid sick leave law has proven to be costly for Connecticut businesses employing service workers. HB 5044 would expand the paid sick leave law to cover every business in the state – forcing businesses with 20 or more employees to provide up to five days of paid leave per year and businesses with less than 20 employees up to five days of unpaid per year.

As CBIA has noted before, the lack of flexibility of the paid sick leave law has resulted in additional costs and administrative burdens for Connecticut businesses. Even prior to the passage of Connecticut paid sick leave mandate in 2011, studies conducted by sick leave advocates showed that nearly 90% of businesses in this state were already providing leave that could be used for employee illness. Yet, as a result of the law, 53% of those businesses already doing the right thing by offering sick leave incurred between 2 and 5% or more in additional costs to comply with the state mandate. Many of these companies reported having to cut hours and other benefits to make up for the increased costs attributable to the paid sick leave law.

Further, businesses have realized none of the promised benefits of the sick leave mandate. Little evidence exists to support the claim that paid sick leave has decreased illness in the workplace or reduced employee turnover.

The expansion of the paid sick leave mandate proposed in HB 5044 has the potential to be economically devastating to Connecticut. Back in 2011, members of the General Assembly saw the wisdom of excluding Connecticut's smallest businesses and the manufacturing sectors from the sick leave mandate. Given our lack of economic recovery as compared to our neighboring states and the majority of the rest of the country, now is not the time to be adding additional burdens to the businesses that still call Connecticut home.

Connecticut is losing population to other states. People are not leaving 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 5044.