



March 8, 2018

Written Testimony in Opposition of  
HB 5044 Fair Treatment of Sick Workers

Sen. Gomes, Sen. Miner, Sen. Porter, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

I am testifying in opposition to HB 5044

My name is Wendy Traub and my husband and I own a small, specialized construction company in the Northwest corner. I am also the Chairman of NFIB's CT Leadership Council, which represents the interests of small business owners across the State.

With respect to the changes being considered for employee sick leave, I am dismayed that you are, once again, considering mandating paid/unpaid sick leave to small businesses. The vast majority of small businesses offer paid time off, whether it be vacation, sick or personal time. By mandating sick leave, you are restricting the employers' ability to determine the best combination of benefits that they can offer.

Our company currently offers both paid vacation and sick days. However, we have a standard 60-day waiting period before any time is accrued. HB5044 proposes that hours be accrued from the very first day of employment. In companies that experience high employee turnover rate, such as ours, a waiting period can be an essential tool in preventing bookkeeping nightmares. Even health insurance allows a 60-day waiting period.

This bill also proposes to allow the employee to carry over paid/unpaid days to the following year. This rule may cause problems for offices, such as mine, that would now have to track this time over several years on an employee-by-employee basis. Restricting our choices as to how we offer our benefits is extremely troublesome. We need to have the freedom to decide when our employees are eligible for benefits.

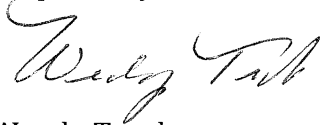
I also question the change of the age of a "child" from eighteen to twenty-six if that child doesn't have any disabilities. Although it may mirror the fact that health

insurance providers allow children of that age to stay on a parent's health plan, I do not think this should apply to employees taking sick time off.

With the majority of small businesses offering some form of paid time off, I am wondering why the legislature would be seriously considering mandated sick leave policies that would target the very employers that, traditionally, offer employee benefits. As most small business employers have a more personal relationship with their employees, it seems strange that the State would feel they must apply a sick leave mandate on them to prevent them from firing their employees. To date, I have not seen any compelling studies that show small business owners do not provide for their employees.

Please retain the current cutoff of fifty employees and avoid any reductions in number of employees to be subjected to the sick leave policies. Connecticut is lucky to have thousands of small businesses, which create jobs for its residents. There is said to be many reasons why our State is not business friendly. Let's not make this another reason.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Traub  
Hemlock Directional Boring, Inc.