

Anderson, Bryan

From: beth angel <angel_computer_llc@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 7:27 PM
To: LABTestimony
Subject: Paid Family Leave Testimony for Thursday's public hearing

Dear Members of Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Beth Angel and I live in East Hampton, Connecticut. I offer my testimony and stand in support of S.B. 1: An Act Concerning Paid Family and Medical Leave and H.B. 5003: An Act Implementing a Paid Family and Medical Leave Program.

While I am retired and would not be using this personally, I have many friends and neighbors, both male and female, that I have heard from that this would help. Many have small children. When the children get sick the parents would like to be home with their kids to take care of them and show them some love as they get well. My neighbors and friends would also need the paid medical leave to keep well so they can continue to take care of their families daily. Being sick can hinder their ability to be there for their families.

When I was working, my job provided sick days. Unfortunately, that only covered a limited amount of time. Paid leave would cover instances where I needed a longer period to deal with a more serious illness. Too often we don't have enough time to fully get well, we go back to work before getting completely well, and get sick all over again and sometimes in a worse state. I have seen it too often on my jobs.

I think paid family and medical leave would benefit our communities and the whole state to keep people healthy and avoid the spread of diseases.

As legislators for the people of the state of Connecticut, please take into consideration the needs of your constituents. Unfortunately, too many people either are not eligible or just can't afford to take unpaid leave as in the federal FMLA. They need that paycheck. Too few workers, 17% including 6% of low-wage workers, can access paid leave through their employer.

These states near us have passed and successfully implemented paid leave: Rhode Island, New York, and New Jersey. Massachusetts passed paid leave in July 2018. There is legislation pending in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. Joining these states will help Connecticut stay competitive in our region and attract and retain workers.

Paid leave is very important for economic and racial justice. Lack of paid leave disproportionately impacts workers of color, who are overrepresented in low-wage jobs that do not provide paid leave and, due to racial wealth and wage gaps, have fewer resources to absorb the financial impact of a family or personal medical issue. Access to paid parental leave is critical to the health of Black women, who face much higher rates of maternal mortality and complications from pregnancy.

Paid leave benefits Connecticut's economy and businesses. Without paid leave, workers fall behind on bills and medical expenses, and are more likely to file for bankruptcy, which negatively impacts the economy. It also improves worker retention and saves employers' expensive turnover costs. As an example, in California after more than 10 years of paid leave, employers overwhelmingly report positive or neutral impact on their business.

As someone who has gone without paid leave, I strongly support S.B. 1. It will make the lives of so many who work hard at their jobs to get the much needed help to maintain a healthy work and home life. I hope the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers will vote favorably this year to make paid family and medical leave a reality for all Connecticut workers.

Thank you for your time,
Beth Angel
East Hampton, CT