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Denitra Pearson, Personal Care Attendant
Before the Committee on Labor and
Public Employees

In Support of SB 1 and HB 5003 (RAISED), AN ACT CONCERNING PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE and AN ACT IMPLEMENTING A PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE PROGRAM

Good Morning Chairs Kushner and Porter and members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employees, my name is Denitra Pearson and I am here to talk about the importance of paid family and medical leave. I live in New Haven, Connecticut, and have worked as a home care worker since I was seventeen. I'm a mother of five, although I am pregnant with my sixth child and due on February 19th.

I love my job as a home care worker, but it is unfair to me as a worker that I have to choose between going back to work to pay my bills or staying home and building a relationship with my new born child. That is a terrible decision for a new mother to have to make. With that said, I am very fortunate to have a wonderful husband and mother-in-law that can help take care of my newborn child. However, that is not a luxury that everyone has.

You have single mothers out here with no one to turn to and bills to pay. After they give birth and return home from the hospital they risk falling behind on their bills or losing their job entirely if they do not return to work.

Passing paid family medical leave would prevent new mothers from having to make this horrible decision and give them the time they need to care for their child in its earliest days. It may be too late for paid family medical leave to help me, but if you pass this bill you will be helping countless mothers and fathers in the future start their families without risking financial crisis.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.