

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

My name is Emily Rodewald and I live in Simsbury, Connecticut. I stand in support in 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.

It has been almost 3 years since my mother and I moved my grandparents across the United States from California to Connecticut to live with us. At ages 86 and 87 years old they could no longer care for themselves and we felt that they would be better cared for and attended to if they moved in with us. However, we did not know what we were getting ourselves into. My mother, the main provider for our family, works for a small business owner and gets paid hourly. Over the past three years, there have been numerous times when she has had to miss work due to being the sole caregiver of her parents. Although, her employer has been understanding of our family circumstances, my mother does not get compensated for those days she has had to miss work to deal with the unexpected medical emergencies that have begun to arise more frequently due to taking care of her elderly parents. Lack of paid leave directly impacts my family, not only financially, but emotionally as well due to the amount of stress it causes.

Paid Family and Medical Leave would benefit my family. It would alleviate the stress and the worry that permeates my family if my mom were able to take paid time off to properly care for my ailing grandparents. It would decrease the financial stress and burden of having to miss work to focus on the health and well-being of my grandparents. My mother would no longer stress over having to choose between caring and tending to my grandparents and or having to go to work to keep a roof over our heads.

As you have heard today, Connecticut is now surrounded by states that have passed paid leave. States including Rhode Island, New York and New Jersey have passed and successfully implemented paid leave programs. Massachusetts passed paid leave in July 2018. It is time for Connecticut to do the same.

Thank you for your time,

Emily Rodewald