



**Testimony of Dominique M. Torok  
CT Alliance for Retired Americans  
Labor & Public Employees Committee  
Connecticut General Assembly  
February 14, 2019**

**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**

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

My name is Dominique Torok, I am from Waterbury. Today I am here representing the CT Alliance for Retired Americans comprised of 50,000 members in the state and affiliate of the National Alliance for Retired Americans. We support 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.

I would like to begin with a quotation from the Working Families Party, "Americans work more hours and have less time off than people in any other advanced nation in the world. Despite those hours many workers cannot make ends meet at the end of the month. It is a situation that puts families into crisis. Workers are faced with an impossible choice when they cannot afford to take time off."

Access to paid leave provides individuals with a better choice as it provides an opportunity to receive pay while caring for a loved one however; the impact of this bill goes far beyond economic stability. Paid leave provides individuals with time to bond with a new child, time to care for a sick relative, and time to heal themselves after a medical procedure. Without access to paid leave families are forced to forgo these opportunities which can have a lasting emotional impact, feelings of guilt, anger, depression etc.

As many of the members of the CT Alliance for Retired Americans are themselves aging, this issue is one that has a direct impact. The current FMLA doesn't work for most working families, with the majority of workers ineligible or simply unable to afford taking unpaid leave. Without paid leave, workers fall behind on bills and medical expenses. We want to ensure that not only the members of our organization are well taken care of but that families in the state of CT are also well taken care of. We want to ensure that CT working families have a choice, that they are not left voiceless, and that they are able to remain financially stable in what is often a challenging time emotionally.

For the sake of our elders, our children, and our grandchildren, we urge the committee and Connecticut lawmakers to support S.B. 1 and H.B. 5003 this session to help Connecticut remain economically competitive and give working families in our state the support they deserve.

Thank you for your time,  
Dominique Torok, Special Projects Manager  
CT Alliance for Retired Americans