

TESTIMONY OF ANDREA BARTON REEVES
CEO, CT PAID LEAVE AUTHORITY
SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 19, 2021

Committee Co-Chairs Sen. Flexer and Rep. Fox, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee: My name is Andrea Barton Reeves and I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony in favor of Governor's Bill 883, An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Governor's Council on Women & Girls.

This bill is a much needed and long overdue step in facilitating access for women to run for elected office and to promote equity on state boards and commissions. Too often, either unintentionally or by-design, unnecessary barriers prevent women and people from marginalized communities from participating in our political process, and like any other business, an absence of diverse voices hurts the bottom line.

We saw this play out prominently last year with the pandemic, which disproportionately impacted women and people of color, constituencies that were constrained by job roles, school closures and inability to find quality childcare. Policies that affirm the unique demands on women, specifically allowing for childcare to be reimbursed for candidates seeking elected office, increases the likelihood that more women will pursue opportunities to represent their constituents in the House, Senate, or Executive Office.

The bill would also increase transparency in representation on state boards and commissions by requiring those bodies to report their composition by race and gender. Shining a light on the makeup of state boards and commissions will undoubtedly prompt those with appointing authority to be more equitable in their selections. Diversity fosters equity and equity promotes inclusion, which can only make our state better and stronger.

Governor Lamont and the Connecticut General Assembly have demonstrated their courage and willingness to take bold action to enhance opportunity and access before. This bill, which reflects the tireless efforts of the Council on Women and Girls, is further evidence of that fact.

Thank you again for allowing me to present this testimony, and for your continued efforts to create a seat at the table for each of us.