



Waterbury Regional Chamber
driving business to business

Testimony of Lynn Ward, President & CEO
Waterbury Regional Chamber
Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee,
Hartford, CT
March 8, 2023

Testifying in opposition to SB 1178 AN ACT EXPANDING CONNECTICUT PAID
SICK DAYS.

Good afternoon, Senator Kushner, Representative Sanchez, Senator Sampson, Representative Ackert and members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee. The Waterbury Regional Chamber, which serves 14 towns in the greater Waterbury region and represents the collective interests of 900 members in matters of public policy and economic development, **strongly opposes Senate Bill 1178 An act expanding Connecticut's paid sick days.**

The proposed legislation is attempting to fix a problem that our legislators solved back in 2012. Connecticut's employees currently have the option to use one of the country's most benevolent paid family/medical leave programs available. At some point, elected officials in Hartford must keep the employer in mind while considering employees. Adding more mandates on top of existing burdens will be detrimental to their livelihoods, especially during this fragile economic recovery period. While good intentioned, feedback from our small business owners who are already struggling to survive proved that the cost of doing business here in Connecticut is pushing them to a tipping point.

On top of the vast increase in paid sick leave hours, the most fiscally irresponsible aspect of the bill is the addition of including small businesses to the mandates. Even companies with one or more employees will now be forced to double the allowed sick leave hours. Waterbury Regional Chamber Public Policy chairman and Traver IDC President Jack Traver stated "The new mandated adjustment in paid sick leave hours proposed in SB 1178 has the power to financially bury these small businesses throughout Connecticut. The General Assembly had the foresight to exclude these lesser staffed employers along with manufacturing companies back in 2011. Elected officials should focus on legislation that helps those who have taken the risk to start a business in our state, not hurt them." Jack, along with our chamber recognize just how steep of a cost small businesses throughout our state will have to pay if this bill passes.

In conclusion, this legislation will hurt even the smallest of businesses in our community. Furthermore, the current system in place, the Connecticut Paid Family Medical Leave program, already provides employees with paid time off . This bill would unfairly transfer the burden to employers to cover the costs of personal and family medical leave. For these reasons, the Waterbury Regional Chamber urges you to take no action on SB 1178.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynn Ward".

Lynn Ward

President & CEO

As a former business participant in chamber job fair I want to let you know that our next job fair will be held may 3 at the courtyard Marriott . the fee to participate will cover costs of table space paid advertising.

Were buying a job board for our website

Open to public to attend for free

As of April 1 we will no longer have fed funds to subsidize free job fairs for businesses to participate

As a result the future job fairs will be avialable to members and non members at the cost of 350 for members 500 for non members

Would you like us

Look forward to hearing from you