



**Connecticut Conference  
United Church of Christ**

125 Sherman Street  
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**Testimony in Support of H.B. 6212 and S.B. 1:  
Acts Creating a Paid Family and Medical Leave System in the State  
Submitted by, Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate  
Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ  
February 16, 2017**

Senator Gomes, Representative Porter, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

I am Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate for the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ, and I am writing today in support of House Bill 6212 and Senate Bill 1, Acts Creating a Paid Family and Medical Leave System in Connecticut which would create a system to compensate individuals who are out on family and medical leave.

I am writing on behalf of the 237 congregations and more than 67,500 people in our state's churches. In fact, the United Church of Christ (UCC) is the largest Protestant denomination in Connecticut. Nationally, the UCC has more than 5,700 congregations with nearly 1 million members. In 1988, the assembled delegates and ministers of the Connecticut Conference met and voted on a Resolution on Workplace and Family Life. That Resolution encourages public policy such as medical and leave benefits.

While the passage of the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was a step forward when it was enacted in the early 90's, it is not currently working for most employees. Seventy-eight percent of those eligible for FMLA do not take it because they can not afford to lose pay. Further, many employees are not even eligible for this unpaid leave because their employer does not meet the size requirements. When employees have access to paid family and medical leave, they are happier and more productive in the workplace and it saves employers' expensive turnover costs. The system that is being suggested would be fully funded by employees with no employer contribution. The system would be publicly administered through the CT-DOL and funded by small employee deductions of 0.5% of weekly earnings up to a cap of \$1,000.<sup>1</sup>

California, Rhode Island and New Jersey offer paid family leave and several other states are considering legislation. After ten years of paid leave in California, employers report positive or neutral impact on their business. Paid leave increased morale and productivity among California employees. As a state and country that supports family values, we should be doing more for our workers.<sup>2</sup>

The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ therefore urges the Labor and Public Employees Committee to support House Bill 6212 and S.B. 1: Acts Creating a Paid Family and Medical Leave System in the State which would create a system to compensate individuals who are out on family and medical leave. People deserve access to paid time off if they are seriously ill, having a baby or taking care of a family member. We do not think workers should have to choose between their health or the health of a family member, and their jobs.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of House Bill 6212 and Senate Bill 1.

Blessings,  
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<sup>1</sup> CT Campaign for Paid Family Leave

<sup>2</sup> CT Campaign for Paid Family Leave

**God is still speaking,**

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