



**Testimony before the Labor and Public Employees Committee  
Regarding S.B. 7 An Act Concerning Connecticut Paid Sick Days**

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On behalf of Health Equity Solutions  
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Dear Senator Kushner, Representative Sanchez, Senator Cabrera, Representative Wilson, and esteemed members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

Thank you for accepting this testimony in support of S.B. 7 – An Act Concerning Connecticut Paid Sick Days on behalf of Health Equity Solutions (HES), a non-profit organization with a statewide focus on advancing health equity through anti-racist policies and practices. Our vision is for every Connecticut resident to attain optimal health regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. We urge the committee to **support** the expansion of paid sick days at the state level and encourage you to guarantee that this benefit extends to all Connecticut workers.

It is imperative that Connecticut residents have paid sick days, as this allows them to have peace of mind that they would be able to afford to take days off to recover from illness, provide care for a sick family member, or attend to any emergency in their daily life. Not having paid sick days not only perpetuates structural inequities within the labor market, where predominantly Black, Latino/a, Indigenous, and other communities of color and workers who have a lower income, lack access to paid sick leave, but it also generates adverse economic consequences. Unequal access to paid sick leave exacerbates challenges for the broader economy, such as prompting workers to resign due to [unmet sick leave needs](#), thereby aggravating the ongoing labor shortage and forcing them to go without pay, or compelling workers to [attend work while ill](#), which fuels the [transmission of infectious diseases](#).

The United States is one of only three countries that does not have a national paid leave program for its workforce. It is widely acknowledged that these programs not only contribute to mitigating the transmission of infectious diseases but also enhance labor force engagement and productivity. Research indicates that [Black and Latino/a individuals in the United States](#) have less access to paid leave compared to their white counterparts, which poses challenges for them in taking time off to recuperate from medical procedures or illnesses.

Connecticut sets a precedent in 2011 by becoming the first state to mandate certain employers to offer paid sick days. However, the legislation exclusively pertains to employers with 50 or more employees in specific service occupations. Recent assessments reveal that only 11% of Connecticut's employed workforce meet the requirements to qualify for paid sick days under the existing law. As a result, approximately 1.6 million workers in Connecticut are presently excluded from the legislation, depriving them of the assurance of paid sick time when necessary. The 2011 law had positive outcomes where it has been seen Employees within the covered occupations experienced a more [rapid reduction in occupational injuries and illnesses](#) compared to their counterparts in Connecticut, as well as those in similar occupations in New York and nationwide.

We strongly support SB 7 as strive to advance health equity in the state and build on Connecticut's groundbreaking law by removing the threshold related to (1) employer size and classifications specified



in the current law, (2) to ensure that all Connecticut workers irrespective of their workplace have access to paid sick days, and (3) to eliminate the waiting period for a worker to begin accruing paid sick time after 680 hours of work (about 4 months) to immediately after their start date. We strongly support increasing the number of paid sick time hours from 40 to 80 hours for all Connecticut workers. This legislation would make it possible for more Connecticut workers to take care of their health and their loved ones, increase access to healthcare, and ensure we are building a more equitable Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B.7, An Act Concerning Connecticut Paid Sick Days. We can be reached with any questions at [kvilleda@hesct.org](mailto:kvilleda@hesct.org).