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**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD**

**BEFORE THE LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**SB 1: AN ACT CONCERNING PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE**

**March 8, 2018**

**Erik Rettig, Northeast Director  
Small Business Majority**

Dear Co-Chairs Gomes, Porter, Miner, Ranking Member Bocchino and members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to share comments with you regarding the importance of publicly-administered family medical leave insurance to small business owners and their employees.

SB 1 will provide workers in Connecticut with up to 12 weeks of paid leave a year to bond with a new child or care for a seriously ill family member. This will benefit business by lowering turnover, boosting productivity, and enhancing employee morale. What's more, it's strongly supported by our small business community. In fact, Small Business Majority's scientific opinion polling found 70% of small business owners across the country support the establishment of paid leave insurance programs. What's more, 61% of small business owners support state-administered family leave insurance programs.

Based on the experience of other states with similar programs, a paid leave program is unlikely to have a significant effect on businesses in Connecticut. Additionally, a state-administered paid leave insurance program will help to make small businesses more competitive by ensuring that all workers can receive paid family leave regardless of the size of their company. Small businesses often cannot afford to provide the same paid leave benefits as larger companies, and thus lose valuable workers as a result.

What's more, many small business owners agree that paid family and medical leave isn't just the right thing to do, but that it makes good business sense. Taking care of employees is crucial to retaining a loyal, talented workforce. Small employers support family medical leave policies because they create a happier and more productive staff, which in turn leads to increased profits. Many small business owners think of their employees like family, so it's no surprise they support these types of programs. Policies such as these enable small business owners to foster a better workforce while protecting their workers and their bottom lines.

We also know from our polling that many small firms already have some type of family medical leave policy already in place—either formally or informally. Seven in 10 small business owners have a formal or informal policy for medical leave. Out of these, nearly 61% offer either full or partial pay to their employees, and 22% offer pay depending on the employee.

The bottom line is small business owners understand how important it is for their employees who need to balance their work and family responsibilities to have reasonable options for doing so—options that also meet the needs of their employers. Small businesses' support of family medical leave policies is proof of this. With that in mind, we hope you will support SB 1.

Thank you.

Erik Rettig, Northeast Director  
Small Business Majority