

Labor and Public Employees Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5165

AN ACT EXPANDING CONNECTICUT FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Title: BENEFITS TO NONCERTIFIED SCHOOL EMPLOYEES.

Vote Date: 3/7/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/22/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor & Public Employees Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would allow noncertified school staff, such as custodial and cafeteria workers, to utilize the CT FMLA program to take unpaid leave for personal or family medical issues, without having to risk losing their job.

The substitute language made technical and conforming changes.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None provided.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Jody Barr, Executive Director of AFSCME Council 4 supports noncertified school staff having access to Family and Medical Leave benefits at a lower threshold of required hours, similar to what paraprofessionals are allowed to access the program.

John Brady, AFT Connecticut Vice President supports the reduction in hours from 1250 to 950 to allow noncertified school workers access to Family and Medical Leave benefits. He stated that since many of them do not work 12 months of the year, they are unable to meet the current threshold to receive these benefits.

Shellye Davis, Executive Vice President Connecticut AFL-CIO supports the reduction in hours from 1250 to 950 to allow noncertified school workers access to Family and Medical

Leave benefits. She highlighted that the FMLA program has supported workers across various industries and is cost-neutral for municipalities and boards of education.

Travis Woodward, P.E. President, CSEA SEIU Local 2001 supports this bill because it would expand coverage to allow 10-month hourly employees to have access to Family and Medical Leave benefits. He stated that he believes all workers should have access to this program.

Lynne Griffin, President of AFSMCE Council 4, Local 1303-098 supports allowing for noncertified school workers access to Family and Medical Leave benefits, and shared a personal anecdote about her experience being injured as a cafeteria worker and needing to take unpaid time off, during which she was fortunate that her employer did not fill her position.

Zak Leavy, Legislative Director for AFSCME Council 4 supports the reduction in hours from 1250 to 950 to allow noncertified school workers access to Family and Medical Leave benefits. He stated that this would prove a minimal cost to districts, which would allow noncertified staff to better protect themselves and their families when dealing with illness.

Nick Teeling, Advocacy Deputy Director Connecticut Voices for Children supports allowing noncertified school workers the ability to access Family and Medical Leave benefits.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Dr. Linda Dalessio opposes the bill on the grounds that tax dollars should only be used for the benefit of Connecticut and United States citizens.

Reported by: Jason Snukis

Date: March 14, 2024