

To: Chair Sirotkin and the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs  
From: Sue Bette, Owner of Bluebird Barbecue in Burlington

I'm here today to express my support for H.196. Protecting Vermont families when they are at their most vulnerable - through a family and medical leave insurance program - is not only the right thing to do, it also makes good economic sense for Vermont.

I recognize the importance of providing great jobs to my employees -- not only because it's good for my business, but because it's also good for the health and wellbeing of my staff, their families, and the overall Vermont economy.

As a small employer, especially in the restaurant industry, it can be incredibly difficult to provide my employees with everything they need - like paid parental or medical leave for example.

Small business owners are often at a competitive disadvantage to larger employers in that we can't always provide necessary benefits to our employees but still compete with larger companies that can. This program would help level the playing field for small businesses like mine.

I also believe that a statewide family and medical leave insurance program will help Vermont attract and retain young professionals and families to the state. We have long known that Vermont's population is aging, and the time is now to act on real plans and policies that attract young workers to settle and raise their families in Vermont in order to ensure the state's economic growth and sustainability.

That's why we need to create a statewide family and medical leave insurance program to not only support healthy Vermont families and communities but small businesses and the overall economy.

As you discuss this bill in your committee, I encourage you to consider restoring the personal medical leave component of the program and extending the number of weeks from six to twelve. When someone experiences an unexpected illness, they too need this essential support to keep them afloat and twelve weeks (for bonding, recovering, or caregiving time) should be the minimum amount of time available.

Thank you for your work on this issue.

Sue Bette

Owner of Bluebird Barbecue in Burlington

To: Chair Sirotkin and the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs

From: Sue Bette, Owner of Bluebird Barbecue in Burlington

I'm here today to express my support for H.196. Protecting Vermont families when they are at their most vulnerable - through a family and medical leave insurance program - is not only the right thing to do, it also makes good economic sense for Vermont.

I recognize the importance of providing great jobs to my employees -- not only because it's good for my business, but because it's also good for the health and wellbeing of my staff, their families, and the overall Vermont economy.

As a small employer, especially in the restaurant industry, it can be incredibly difficult to provide my employees with everything they need - like paid parental or medical leave for example.

Small business owners are often at a competitive disadvantage to larger employers in that we can't always provide necessary benefits to our employees but still compete with larger companies that can. This program would help level the playing field for small businesses like mine.

I also believe that a statewide family and medical leave insurance program will help Vermont attract and retain young professionals and families to the state. We have long known that Vermont's population is aging, and the time is now to act on real plans and policies that attract young workers to settle and raise their families in Vermont in order to ensure the state's economic growth and sustainability.

That's why we need to create a statewide family and medical leave insurance program to not only support healthy Vermont families and communities but small businesses and the overall economy.

As you discuss this bill in your committee, I encourage you to consider restoring the personal medical leave component of the program and extending the number of weeks from six to twelve. When someone experiences an unexpected illness, they too need this essential support to keep them afloat and twelve weeks (for bonding, recovering, or caregiving time) should be the minimum amount of time available.

Thank you for your work on this issue.

Sue Bette  
Owner of Bluebird Barbecue in Burlington