

**Testimony In Opposition to LD 1964, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Develop a Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program**

Yazmín Saraya Jean  
Saco, ME  
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Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing,

My name is Yazmin Saraya Jean and I live in Saco, Me. I am here today to oppose the Sponsor's Amendment LD 1964, "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Develop a Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program." This proposal is one of the most benefit rich and expensive in the country and is not in line with the needs of Maine's workers and businesses.

My husband and I own Chez Rosa in Kennebunkport. A small 68 seat French neighborhood bistro. We have 23 employees, 17 of those year-round. We pride ourselves on always looking out for the well-being of our staff by providing a lot of benefits above the industry average, and we will continue to do so. We believe that happy and healthy people make businesses thrive and grow. We would love to continue to work on this matter with some more parameters that would allow businesses to be there for their employees and support them in difficult times. However, we want to make sure it is done in a responsible manner so we can continue to provide the benefits in the long run and most importantly so we can continue to employ these people. We believe this can be done without putting the business's existence in jeopardy. Another very worrisome part of this bill is the length of leave this allows. 12 weeks seems more than any small business could handle without causing harm to everyone else on the team. Not only in a financial way but in this very tight labor market conditions going without a person for 12 weeks could have very catastrophic consequences.

We would like to see a bill that protects the employees while also protecting business from the benefit being misused.

Finally, with this bill there would be an exemption to contribute as an employer if you have less than 15 employees. I worry this would be an incentive to always keep less staff. I think this would prevent growth and promote unemployment, which is not a healthy path to take.

Please vote LD 1964 ought not to pass. As crafted this proposal would likely cause harm to Maine businesses, the people of Maine and the greater economy. Thank you, and I'd be pleased to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Yazmin Saraya Jean