

Jean Ginn Marvin

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Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and Members of the Labor and Housing Committee

My name is Jean Ginn Marvin and I reside in Scarborough. I am here today to speak in opposition to LD 1964.

My family owns the Nonantum Resort in Kennebunkport. I have been employed there for the past 25 years. We have a year-round staff of 20 and a seasonal staff of 200.

We have a trophy case full of awards in our lobby that includes being named to the coveted "Best Places To Work In Maine" for the past 7 years in a row. Governor Mills gave us the Governor's Award for Tourism Leadership and Growth, The Institute for Maine Family Business named us The Business of the Year and we have been chosen for literally dozens of others honors. We are very serious about our role in the community and the state.

We are one of the very few hospitality businesses to be fully staffed. The reasons for this are many but the bottom line of the story is we take care of our employees.

I want to give you an example from last winter. One of our banquet captains was rushed by ambulance to the hospital completely unexpectedly. He is a 30 year old man and at the

time had two babies and a crazy dog. His wife (who also works at The Nonantum) went to the hospital to be at his side. She stayed without hesitation sleeping in a chair in his room for days because she knew, without a doubt, The Nonantum Family had her back. Each day an army of people showed up to assist. We held babies, walked the dog, cleaned the house, kept up with the laundry and the shoveling and filled the fridge with food.

Even after they came back home, we hovered, to make sure their needs were taken care of. The diagnosis was Crohn's and I am happy to say it is under control. He came back to work when he was ready. He worked short days to start. She came back to work when she was ready. She also worked some short days as she did not want him home alone and she needed time with her children.

The government did not tell me what to do. I just did the right thing. And I am sure you are thinking "well not everyone is like you". And that is certainly true. But the very vast majority of employers in Maine ARE like me. They care about their people and they take good care of them. They do not need the government to set standards for them.

I would also say the very vast majority of employees are great people. They do their best everyday and it is due to their efforts that Maine is known as Vacationland. Without them, we have no hospitality industry. That is certainly one of the reasons the employers take such great care of their employees.

It seems to me to be a huge overreach of government to tell great employers how to take care of their own. Instead of telling most of our employers how to do their job, why not set up a system that allows the very few who do not do the right thing to be assisted by government. A pool of money could be set aside to support the employees in need who work at a place that cannot or won't take care of their team. My guess is nearly all of them cannot afford to do it or they would. Just as there are a few bad apples on the employer side, there are also a few bad apples on the employee side. But lets not legislate for the few. Lets create laws that support folks who do the right thing, not the wrong thing.

It would certainly be far cheaper and easier to only be concerned with the very few in need instead of putting together a set of rules that penalize people who are doing the correct thing.

I am in no way suggesting that families do not deserve paid leave in time of crisis or change. Of course they do. I am the mother of 3 and the grandmother of 6. My youngest child was born while I was a seated Legislator. I did not miss a single Legislative Day meaning that my daughter was born Saturday night December 31 and I was in my seat in time for quorum call on the floor of the Maine House Wednesday morning January 4. That certainly is not the way a maternity leave should go but at the time we did not seem to know any better. We know better now and we should do better.

I think we need to go back to the drawing board with this proposal and see what the best way to make it work for everyone would be. As there are only 11 other states with this type of law on the books, we will not have a lot of data to work with, but we will have enough to rework this in to a win/win for us all.

Why not create a law we can all be proud of? Let's make Maine a place that is known for business and government that works together to create opportunity for us all? I strongly urge you to vote no on this bill.

Thank you for your attention and I would be happy to take any questions.