

Testimony of Coralie Giles, RN
President, Maine State Nurses Association
Vice-President, National Nurses United

IN OPPOSITION TO LD 833

“An Act to Expand the Earned Paid Leave Exception”

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor
Hearing: March 19, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Tipping, Chair Roeder, and distinguished members of the Committee on Labor,

On behalf of more than 4,000 registered nurses and health care professionals providing patient care in our state, the **Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United (MSNA) urges the Committee to oppose LD 833, “An Act to Expand the Earned Paid Leave Exception.”**

Employers who offer 80 or more hours of paid leave in good faith are not burdened by being included in a law requiring a smaller amount of leave. However, **exempting employers from the statute requiring earned paid leave means the rules and enforcement mechanisms governing use of paid leave under the statute would not apply.** The existing exemption, relating to collective bargaining agreements, does not have the same problem because collective bargaining agreements have their own enforcement mechanisms. **Without this law, there is little protection for non-union employees if they are not permitted to use their allotted amount of leave.**

Paid sick leave is an essential public health measure. When employees do not have access to paid leave, they come to work sick, which prevents rest and recovery and risks infecting their coworkers and the public. Sick leave policies passed in just seven US cities are estimated to have prevented 100 influenza-like infections per week per 100,000 people.¹ Since that study was published, the advent of Covid-19 has only increased the

¹ Stefan Pichler, Nicolas R. Ziebarth. The Pros and Cons of Sick Pay Schemes: Testing for Contagious Presenteeism and Noncontagious Absenteeism Behavior. NBER Working Paper No. 22530 Issued in August 2016. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w22530>

risk of forcing people to go to work sick. Do not undermine Maine's paid leave law. **We strongly urge the Committee to oppose LD 833.**

Sincerely,

Coralie Giles RN

Coralie (Cokie) Giles, RN
President, Maine State Nurses Association
Vice-President, National Nurses United