



April 22, 2025

Testimony in Opposition to LD 1273, An Act to Make Paid Family and Medical Leave Voluntary

Dear Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Honorable Members of the Labor Committee,

I'm providing this testimony in opposition to LD 1273 not as a constituent, but as a neighbor in a state that made the policy decision proposed in this bill, to invest in voluntary paid family and medical leave rather than a comprehensive program that effectively meets the needs of the state.

New Hampshire's voluntary program has managed to cost the state millions of dollars while doing little to increase the amount of people in our state covered by paid family and medical leave insurance.

New Hampshire has contracted with a private insurer to provide paid family and medical leave insurance to all state employees and non-state employers and individuals who opt into coverage. In a hearing on February 19, 2025 related to the state's voluntary paid leave insurance product New Hampshire's Department of Employment Security deputy commissioner Richard Lavers indicated that after more than two years of availability, other than state employees, only 14,700 New Hampshire people are covered by this voluntary insurance product. That is less than 2% of the state's private sector workforce.

In the same hearing State Representative Len Turcotte indicated that, in spite of the small number of people insured, the program cost New Hampshire \$3.8 million, \$1.9 million to get the program up and running and \$1.9 million so far to market it. State lawmakers recently voted to entirely eliminate the marketing budget for the program, as a result there will be no plan in place to grow the program to cover a significantly larger portion of the work force.

New Hampshire has bragged that its voluntary paid leave system is the first of its kind. It is the first state paid leave program to receive millions of dollars of public investment while failing to meaningfully move the needle on the share of the work force that has paid time off to be there for their families when they need to care for themselves or a family member. It should serve as a cautionary tale rather than a trendsetter.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills.

Amanda Sears

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