

Template Testimony for Allies and Organizations

NOTE: your testimony should not be more than 1 page (max 1.5 pages). Focus on YOUR story.

PLEASE: replace the **yellow** and *italics* with YOUR OWN WRITING. This is just meant as a guide to help you think and write. **Your final testimony should be only your own writing, please remove all the instructions and suggestions.**

Dear Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

Thank you for holding this hearing.

My name is *[Insert Your Name Here]*, I am from *[city or town]*. I am *[mention your organization or group affiliation, or other appropriate and relevant information]*. I stand in support of **SB668: An Act Concerning a Fair Work Week Schedule**.

Explain why this issue is important to you. Questions to think about as you write are below. DO NOT answer these questions one by one, simply write out 1-3 paragraphs.

- *What is your personal connection to the issue?*
- *Describe how the work of your organization touches the lives of families facing challenges with on-call scheduling.*
- **Unions:** *How does this affect your members and their families?* **Child Advocacy Orgs:** *How would this legislation help meet the needs of families and children through the work of your organization?*
- *Do you know or work with children or families who will benefit? Do you have family or friends who would benefit?*
- *What struggles do they go through? How would this legislation help them?*

*Explain why the legislators should support the bill. What does the bill seek to accomplish? Please use the talking points below as guidance to explain why legislators should support this bill. **Please do not copy and paste the following talking points. Rather, adapt or paraphrase. This way, we're not all saying the same thing!***

What is "on-call" scheduling?

- *Throughout Connecticut, thousands of low wage workers, many earning poverty wages, struggle to earn a stable income because of unpredictable work schedules. Employees are often forced to work with little notice, maintain open availability for "on-call" shifts without any guarantee of work, and have shifts cancelled at the last minute.*
- *Our economy and public health suffer when workers cannot predict their hours or pay from day to day, make time for schooling or childcare, secure a second job, or qualify for promotions to full-time employment.*

What is under-scheduling?

- *Many employers refuse to give workers full time hours that would help qualify workers for healthcare and benefits. Instead, they hire several part timers and over-schedule them, sometimes cutting their shifts at the last minute. When a need for additional offers becomes*

available, they decide to hire another part timer instead of offering those hours to its current base of employees. Many of them want the extra hours, but they are denied the opportunity.

- *Has this happened to you or someone you care about? How did it affect your ability to care for your family or pay your bills? Did you have to work a second job?*

What is a clopening?

- *A “clopening” is the conjoining of the words “closing” and “opening.” It’s when you work a late shift and have to report to work the next day in the morning.*
- *Employees deserve a right to rest period between shifts that ensures they have enough time to get a sufficient amount of rest so that they can take care of themselves and their families.*
- *Have you worked clopenings? If so, how did this affect you? If you are reliant on public transportation, please describe how this impacted your schedule and ability to get enough rest?*

How do unpredictable schedules hurt CT’s working families and children?

- *When parents and caregivers' incomes are unstable, families struggle to meet basic expenses and to arrange child care, doctor’s appointments, or family meals.*
- *Families suffer when working people have highly variable hours and **no voice in their work schedules**. As a result, they struggle to spend enough time with their children and spouses.*
- *Balancing unstable work schedules can be hazardous to health, increasing risk of heart disease and leading more people to report physical pain.*

It would help stabilize working families, making them more financially independent

- *Working people in front-line service jobs, who are more likely to be women and people of color, are especially vulnerable to harmful scheduling practices that strain families.*
- *Workers of color are filling the most vacancies in CT’s booming low-wage industries that have driven the state’s job recovery, but at a dangerous cost: Since the start of the recovery, racial and ethnic wage gaps have widened, forcing full-time workers to resort to public assistance programs, like Care for Kids.*
- *Among families with children under five, over a quarter of all working parents and over half of single working parents qualify for Care 4 Kids.*
- *About 30% of children under five in families with one or more working parents qualify for Care 4 Kids due to their parents’ low income*
- *Stabilizing the income of working families, many of whom qualify and are likely enrolled in Care4Kids, would help lift them out of poverty and become more financially independent.*

It will help the economy and make the state more competitive regionally

- *For Connecticut’s economy to grow, we need to create the conditions that make success possible for the vast majority of working class families in our state.*
- *CT is now a regional outlier when it comes to protecting and empowering its workforce and economy. Many of our neighboring states have higher minimum wage, paid family and medical leave and fair work week legislation on the books.*
- *NYC has passed a fair work week law protecting workers who have shifts cancelled or scheduled within a 3 day window. NY State is expanding its pay regulations to compensate employees for cancelled shifts.*

Growing movement for a fair work week

- *Policymakers in Oregon, New York City, Seattle, San Francisco, San Jose, Philadelphia, Chicago and Washington DC have enacted work hours protections. These policies are designed to give working people access to family-sustaining incomes and balanced workweeks.*
- *These policies are designed to empower working people with better opportunities to earn family sustaining incomes and balanced work weeks.*

CT Impact

- *Almost half of all jobs created since the start of the economic recovery have been in low-wage industries, such as retail and fast food service, which pay less and lack the benefits, predictability, and flexibility of jobs past.¹*
- *Over 885K hourly workers in Connecticut, nearly 57% of CT's total workforce.*
- *Over 250,000 of Connecticut's hourly workers are parents of children under 18 years old. Nearly 30% of those working parents are single parents.*
- *Over 350K hourly workers are employed in retail, food service and hospitality industries alone.*
- *Weekly budgeting under on-call scheduling can be difficult for working families, as income streams fluctuate due to shift availability*
- *When parent and caregiver schedules are in flux, families struggle to meet basic expenses and to arrange childcare, doctor's appointments, or family meals*

Last, close and thank them. Here's an example:

I support SB668, the Fair Work Week bill, and hope the committee will vote favorably.

Thank you for your time,

Your Name AND if applicable, Your Title, Organization