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Written Testimony
Comptroller Kevin Lembo
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SB-881 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE PROGRAM.

Good morning Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Senator Miner, Representative Polletta and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of SB-881 An Act Establishing a Paid Family and Medical Leave Program. This bill would create a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Trust Fund to provide replacement income for eligible individuals who must take time away from work due to (1) Birth of a child (2) Placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care (3) Care for an immediate family member with a serious medical condition (4) Serious health condition of the employee (5) To serve as an organ or bone marrow donor (6) Transition for military families.

According to AARP, family caregivers in Connecticut provide approximately 427 million hours of care — worth an estimated \$5.93 billion. If family caregivers are no longer available, the cost to healthcare and long-term services would increase significantly. Removing the threat of financial insecurity with paid family and medical leave would help alleviate additional burdens on state resources.

The benefits to employees are clear but employers will benefit from paid family and medical leave as well. In a comprehensive study of California's Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program, a majority of employers showed either a cost savings or no additional costs related to implementation. According to a consultant for the New Jersey Business and Industry Association, New Jersey businesses experienced little difficulty adjusting to the requirements of the state's laws. Businesses in both states also credited the two state paid family and medical leave laws with increased morals and loyalty among their employees.

A well designed paid family and medical leave program should ideally be implemented in an efficient and cost-effective manner. I hope you will support this legislation for your family, my family and all Connecticut working families.

I urge your support and thank you for your consideration.