

# **Labor and Public Employees Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT**

**Bill No.:** SB-830

AN ACT ESTABLISHING SAFETY STANDARDS TO PREVENT HEAT-  
**Title:** RELATED ILLNESS IN WORKPLACES.

**Vote Date:** 3/20/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/11/2025

**File No.:** 530

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Labor and Public Employees Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

The reason for this bill is to protect workers from hot conditions when working, by ensuring that suitable and sufficient safety measures are in place, and that workers do not endure extreme heat for sustained periods without necessary support. These protections would include providing sufficient shaded areas if conditions are above 80 degrees Fahrenheit, providing sufficient drinking water and breaks, and monitoring employees for risk of heatstroke. It also requires employers to provide training on heat safety for both supervisors and employees.

**The substitute language:** adds in sections regarding responding to heat stroke, water requirements for employees utilizing PPE, acclimatizing employees returning to work after time away, and exempting certain drivers in ventilated vehicles along with emergency responders.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

None provided.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Martin Looney, Senate President Pro Temp- SDO:** Supports the bill, states that there is no guarantee that the federal rules will be implemented, and that Connecticut should join California, Colorado, Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington in implementing occupational heat

stress standards that require employers to take a proactive approach to protecting workers against heat-related injuries and illness.

**Robert Huggins, President of Occupational Safety- Korey Stringer Institute:** Supports the bill, President of Occupational Safety and Assistant professor of Kinesiology at UConn. Recommends amending language of bill to align with current heat safety best practices, stating that multiple sections do not align with practices recommended by nationally recognized heat and safety experts. The document with these recommendations is linked in testimony. Concerned about the temperature thresholds used, lack of detail related to heat acclimatization practices, and the lack of exemptions for emergency operations personnel. Suggested specific revision language to different parts of the bill and provides an explanation for each suggested revision.

**Ed Hawthorne, president-CT AFLO-CIO:** Supports the bill, stating that heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. Explains the dangers of excessive heat in the workplace. Believes the bill will make employees aware of the hazards heat can have on their wellbeing while also ensuring employers are responsible for mitigating those hazards. Urges committee to support the bill.

**Anonymous:** Supports the bill, stating that the issue of heat-related illness has been rising in America and that the state of CT should protect its citizens. Also points out that the Colorado House of Representatives has taken up a similar bill.

**Susan Eastwood, Chapter Chair- Sierra Club Connecticut:** Supports the bill, is the chair of the Ashford Clean Energy Task Force and Chapter Chair of Sierra Club CT. Gives statistics regarding climate change and states that the federal safety standards through OSHA are subject to change. States that Connecticut would be safeguarding the state labor force by passing strong worker protections bills. Lastly, talks about record-breaking heat and extreme weather increasing cases of heat related illnesses and deaths. Includes that other states have enacted occupational health standards, and some have currently proposed legislation. Hopes Connecticut will follow these other states. Suggests other enforcement measures, extending protections to indoor worker, and investing in green infrastructure and nature-based solutions. Urges the committee to pass bill.

**Stephen Lewis, Chair-Legislative Committee-Sierra Club CT & Julianna Larue, Organizer-Sierra Club:** Both support the bill, from the Sierra Club CT emphasizing importance of the bill. Provide information regarding current heat waves and different dangers of high temperatures. States significance of protecting these workers and other positive impacts this bill could have. Strongly support.

**Stacey Zimmerman, Deputy Director-SEIU CT State Council:** Supports the bill, stating that it was hoped OSHA would be the agency to draft rules regarding heat-related safety issues, but now the responsibility must fall on the states. Believes Connecticut has the responsibility to protect the health and safety of its workforce.

**Anastasia Christman, Senior Policy Analyst-National Employment Law Project:** Supports the bill, is a senior policy analyst for the National Employment Law Project (NELP). Believes every worker deserves dignity, fair wages, and safe working conditions. States the various health implications of extreme heat and how this can be avoided by putting

commonsense practices in place. Explains why Connecticut's workers need heat protection as soon as possible. Describes the provisions in SB 830 that protect workers in other comparable states and claims Connecticut would benefit from adopting more practices utilized by such states. States concerns over the preventive rest breaks and wants them to be paid and mandatory in aims of increasing effectiveness. Wants worker training to include information about worker's rights to job protections. Urges Connecticut to implement the heat protection standard as quickly as possible because the warmer months are fast approaching.

**Kirsten Ek, Internal Medicine Physician:** Supports bill, sees the effects of heat-related illness on workers firsthand as a physician. Says that without strong worker protections, the workers and economy will suffer. Explains that heat projections for the coming decades are ominous and that there are limits to physiologic heat tolerance in humans. Is hopeful that Connecticut will work towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions but thinks the state should provide immediate protections to workers in the meantime. Asks for committee to vote in support of SB 830.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Mike Allen, Safety Officer- ENCON Heating – AC:** Opposes the bill, stating that it does not provide any additional protections for employees that employers, such as ENCON, already provides. Believes the proposed measures are burdensome in their administration and record-keeping requirements. States the meteorological norms and extremes recognized by management are shared with employees hourly as a precaution. Explains that ENCON cannot support bill because it is flawed and creates regulations that are above those already proposed by OSHA.

**Helen Brooks, VP Government Relations- FEDEX:** Opposes bill, suggesting that a new subsection needs to be added and the remaining subsections should be re-numbered, and many clarifications added. States including an exception for incidental exposures and recommends clarifying the definition of temperature and how it is measured, adding that "heat-index" should be removed from the bill. States the in some cases it would be infeasible or unsafe to create shaded areas, and the bill should allow for that. Adding that the section regarding mandatory heat breaks should specify that it is only for days when the temperature exceeds ninety-five degrees and is not for every workday. Adds the need for clarity on the scope of Section 2, specifically that a work area that is not air conditioned, but ventilation or engineering controls maintain the temperature below 80 degrees, should be exempted. Adding that the provision of providing potable water is unfeasible and goes beyond OSHA recommendations.

**Axel Carrion, VP State Government Affairs- UPS:** Opposes bill, employs over 3,800 individuals, and serve 15,000 businesses in Connecticut. States that safety is a top priority for UPS and cares deeply about their employees. UPS and Teamsters collectively bargained a contract that included heat temperature language back in 2023. Teamsters issued a statement emphasizing the contracts positive impact. This statement also recognizes wins in health and safety protections. Other states that have used the approach including Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) in their temperature protection bills. Requests that the State of Connecticut recognize CBAs with heat protection language bargained in good faith by amending the bill to include a CBA exemption.

**Betsy Gara, Executive Director-COST:** Opposes bill, concerned that the bill will impose an unfunded mandate on municipal employers because it does not define employer. States that the bill is unnecessary because OSHA has covered the issues being addressed. The bill may create more requirements for municipal employers that differ from OSHA's and could create confusion. Urges lawmakers to refrain from enacting any new or unfunded mandates so as not to burden taxpayers further.

**Bob Kunz, Corporate Safety Director-Dimeo Construction Company:** Opposes bill, providing his professional perspective on topics within the bill such as safety, heat illness prevention plans, and personal successes. Believes that OSHA adequately covers the issues in the bill and gives OSHA's enforcement standards. Committee Bill No. 830 is a one-size fits all incomplete outline that doesn't recognize unique aspects of the construction industry, for example: Multi-employer worksite or Labor management agreements.

**Zachary McKeown, Advocacy Manager-CCM:** Urges committee to take no action as the impact of this bill on municipalities is still unclear. There is too much uncertainty in how towns and cities would implement these mandates.

**Frank Ricci, Labor Fellow-Yankee Institute:** Opposes the bill, serving as a fellow at Yankee Institute, believes bill imposes excessive regulations and costs that outweigh benefits. This would negatively impact small businesses especially. Provided personal anecdotes to further explain how this would impact small businesses in landscaping. Finds training requirements an overreach and believes wording of bill is vague.

**Paul Amarone, Public Policy Associate-CBIA:** Opposes bill, is public policy associate and advocacy manager at CBIA. First, bill does not clarify which sectors will be impacted. Bill is repetitive. Expresses concerns over language in lines 173-177 and on mandating employers to provide employees with highly specific training. Suggests that bill is too broad to be enforceable. Urges committee to take no action.

**John Blair, President-Motor Transport Assoc. of CT:** Opposes bill, is president of the Motor Transportation Association of Connecticut (MTAC). Lists four main reasons for opposition. First, industries may have difficulty complying due to varying state and federal laws. Second, it is difficult to regulate the environment and temperature of a transportation vehicle versus a cabin or warehouse. Third, this increases operational costs for employers. Lastly, the increase in breaks and troubles with scheduling could lead to inefficiency in time-critical industries. The bill does not provide adequate solutions to the unique challenges the transportation industry is facing.

**John Butts, Don Shubert, CCIA, and Daniel Hall, Vice President Safety Health-CH Nickerson Co Inc:** Oppose the bill with matching testimony as members of CCIA and vice president of safety health at CH Nickerson, because the bill is unnecessary considering existing protections in place and number of heat-related injuries and illness in Connecticut. Describes the existing OSHA regulations and timeline of recent updates to those regulations. Believes that a focus on education and enforcement of current standards would be more effective.

**David Golembeski, GC-Supt – Govt relations chair-Newton CC – CT Assn of GC Supts:** Opposes bill, having worked for over two decades with outdoor golf courses. Explained

personal experience with temperatures outside during the summer months. Finds the bill as an overreach into the workplace.

**Ted Huizinga, owner-Eastern Mechanical services Inc:** Opposes bill, is a mechanical contractor. Believes that the industry best practices already address heat safety and has a list of concerns with the bill. He finds that bill unnecessary due to the federal OSHA standards and non-flexible do to the broadness and rigidity of the bill. He states that the record-keeping and training mandates of the bill do not account for varying work conditions, or the individual needs of job sites. He states the bill creates unintended consequences for workforce efficiency

**Marko Kaar, Director of Safety Operations- Bartless Brainard Eacott:** Opposes bill, director of safety operations at Bartlett Brainard Eacott in Bloomfield, CT. Is an authorized OSH outreach trainer, manager, and business owner of safety in construction. Believes that OSHA already adequately addresses the issues in the bill. Affirms Bartlett Brainard Eacott's commitment to taking proactive safety measures to protect workers.

**Jim Perras, CEO-HBRA of CT:** Opposes bill, is CEO of Home Builders and Remodelers Association. States the bill is unnecessary with rigid mandates. The bill will increase cost of construction and, therefore, housing prices. Additional burdens would have negative impact on working families. Urges committee to work with industry stakeholders to develop flexible and unique guidelines rather than strict mandates. Concerned bill will exacerbate the CT housing crisis.

**Leigh Turner Jr., EHS Manager-Galasso Materials LLC:** Opposes the bill because it imposes excessive financial, logistical, and legal burdens on businesses. Instead, suggests creating industry-specific guidelines that are more flexible. Employs 5 paving crews of about 10 employees each. The daily high temperature during their paving season, June-September, is 80 degrees. Provides a list of supporting evidence opposing the bill's effectiveness. Recommends targeted regulations for high-risk industries, encouraging voluntary compliance with OSHA guidelines, providing tax incentives for businesses to invest in cooling equipment, and allowing industry-specific alternatives.

**Janice Jackson:** Opposed bill for various personal reasons largely not in relation to content of the bill.

**Reported by: Allie West & Ian Graves**

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