

# Labor and Public Employees Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-345 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING BREASTFEEDING IN THE WORKPLACE, PRE AND POST-SHIFT HOURS AND ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY

**Title:** WORKPLACE HEAT SAFETY STANDARDS.

**Vote Date:** 3/17/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/3/2026

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor & Public Employees Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

The reason for this bill is to ensure that workers who need to breastfeed are provided with appropriate time and facilities to do so as needed. This would align Connecticut's statutes with federal law and expand upon previous efforts to support women who need to express in the workplace. Another reason for this bill is to require that employers pay workers for time when the workers are required to be on premises before and after their shift, such as for mandated security screenings. Some employers do not consider this time to factor into hours worked at present, and as such do not pay workers during that time. Finally, this bill also seeks to create a task force to study heat safety standards in the workplace, in order to ensure that workers in Connecticut do not have to deal with dangerous heat conditions for extended periods of time.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Dante Bartolomeo, Commissioner, CT Department of Labor** – submitted testimony stating that Section 2 of SB 345 would amend the definition of "hours worked" by including the time an employee spends in security screenings required by an employer.

The CT Dept of Labor's Wage and Workplace Standards Division considers this as "wait time" pursuant to administrative regulations which read in part, "hours worked include all time during which an employee is required by the employer to be on the employer's premises or to be on duty, or to be at the prescribed work place, and all time during which an employee is employed or permitted to work". Such time includes when an employee is required to wait on the premises while no work is provided by the employer. This wait time is similar to time

spent waiting to punch in or out for a shift. The Wage Division has enforced that time as compensable. The CT Department of Labor finds Section 2 unnecessary for enforcement purposes

**Tanya Hughes, Executive Director, CHRO:** Ms. Hughes is in support of the bill. She states that Section 1 of the bill gives employees the opportunity to use break time to express breastmilk when needed. She claims the bill puts Connecticut more in line with federal law under the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act). She adds the bill requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation for employees that are pregnant or lactating.

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

**Senator Martin Looney, State of CT** - expresses his support of this bill because it would ensure that security screenings required by an employer must be included in the definition of "hours worked"; establish a task force to study and provide recommendations for the establishment of heat safety standards in the workplace, and align state and federal law regarding break times for the purpose of breastfeeding or expressing milk during the work day. This legislation would require that employees are paid for the time they spend undergoing security screenings before and after work hours. There are some employers that require security screenings and do not credit the time as work time. This bill would clarify the statutory intent.

**Anne Whalen:** Ms. Whalen is in support of the bill. She states that when she returned to work in December of 2024 after giving birth, she was assured that there would be no issue with her taking breaks to breast pump. However, in January of 2025 when she attempted to take a break she was informed that there was no one to cover for her and they were not required to provide coverage. She claims that when she spoke to her superior about this, he told her he would investigate it, and he never got back to her. After speaking to her union, she was provided with coverage, but she was told she would have to make this up by serving on lunch duty. She adds that this should never happen to any woman.

**Anonymous 11:** She explains that she was pregnant during the COVID pandemic shutdown, her son was born in May of 2020, and she returned to work as a teacher in August 2020. She claims that she did inform her administration of her plans to breast pump while at school, which she was told that according to start law she had the ability to do so during her breaks in a suitable room. She explains that when she serviced her schedule for the year her break and lunch were only forty-five minutes apart which was not enough time to fully replenish milk. When she brought this up to her administration nothing was done. She states this would lead mothers to seek out other solutions that are not suitable, and this could all be avoided with proper legislation. As for the room she was given to pump in it was a supply closet that could be accessed by anyone at any time. She adds that not only does the milk need to refrigerate but so does the pumps, this is a requirement of breastfeeding mothers. For these reasons she is in support of the bill.

**Chad Cardillo, Secondary Vice President, Meriden Federation of Teachers:** Mr. Cardillo is in support of the bill because it creates accommodation for breastfeeding teachers. He

explains that he had a teacher encounter many roadblocks while attempting to express breast milk at work. As a result, she left the district.

**Kate Dias, President, CEA:** Ms. Dias is in support of the bill, specifically Section 1 which regards breaking feeding. She believes this is an important to addressing workplace gender imbalances. She states that the bill would create flexibility in the timing and frequency for employees to express milk. Along with helping school districts accomplish three important objectives: promoting equity, extending the public health benefits of breastfeeding, and aiding the fiscal health of school districts. She adds that the bill will move the state in an anti-discriminatory direction and allows mothers and infants to enjoy the benefits of breastfeeding. Ms. Dias moves on to look at Section 3 which proposes a Task Force to Study Workplace Heat Safety Standards. She states that heat related illnesses are a big issue in the classroom with effects everyone present.

**Ed Hawthorne, President, Connecticut AFL-CIO:** Mr. Hawthorne is in support of the bill. He states that section 1 of the bill creates breaks for nursing mothers, which has health benefits for mothers and infants, and allows mothers to return to work faster. Section 2 of the bill amends “hours worked” to include time an employee spends in employer mandated security screenings. Screenings are typically a distance away from the workplace and five to twenty minutes long. He explains that Pennsylvania law requires workers to be paid for time spent in security screenings. He adds that this has been an ongoing issue for Amazon and this bill will attempt to fix it. Mr. Hawthorne states that section 3 of the bill is a study and provides e recommendations on creating heat safety workplace standards. He states that heat is the leading cause of death in whether related deaths and it effects many industries.

**Tonishia Signore, Policy Director, She Leads Justice:** Ms. Signore is in support of the bill because it requires employees to provide breaks to breast feeding mothers. She states that there are serval benefits to breast feeding, such has better health outcomes. She adds that this is one step closer to creating a fair care-centered economy in our state.

**Jess Zaccagnino, Policy Counsel-ACLU-CT** – submitted testimony supporting the bill because supporting breastfeeding parents helps all people in Connecticut to continue to participate fully in society. By aligning state law with federal law and strengthening workplace protections, this bill advances gender, racial, and economic justice.

**Tenny Larsen, New Haven Resident** – submitted testimony in support of this legislation because federal heat protections are temporary and insufficient. Connecticut lacks state level OSHA enforcement for private-sector workers and climate change is increasing heat risk in CT faster than the national average. Requiring a task force to study heat-related illness in the workplace Is necessary to close a critical worker protection gap and align CT with best practices already adopted in other states. Federal Heat Protections are temporary and weak. A proposed OSHA heat rule in 2024 has yet to be finalized by the current administration. In addition, she provides evidence to address this problem.

**Alison Correia:** Ms. Correia is in support of the bill for reasons unstated.

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

**Paul Amarone, Senior Policy Director, CBIA:** Mr. Amarone has many concerns regarding the bill. He states that in February of 2026 the Connecticut Supreme Court unanimously in *Del Rio v. Amazon* that Connecticut General Statutes § 31-76b(2)(A) requires compensation for all time employees are required to be on employer premises. The court also ruled that Connecticut has not incorporated the federal Portal-to-Portal Act of 1947 into state law which means the federal framework that exempts preliminary and postliminary activities from compensable time simply does not apply here. Connecticut is one of a few states to do this. He states that Section 2 of the bill would turn this ruling into statute without addressing any structural gaps. He says his concern is that there are no guidelines regarding the range of other brief, incidental workplace activities, and it offers no safe harbor or retroactivity protection for employers who operated in good faith. He states that last fall Nevada's Supreme Court has a similar ruling in *Amazon.com Services, LLC v. Malloy*. The legislation quickly passed Senate Bill 8 which incorporated federal Portal-to-Portal Act exclusions directly into Nevada statute, which balances everything. He adds that Section 2 of the bill assumes that employers can practically and accurately track; precisely when an employee enters a security line, duration of each screening, daily variable wait times, and pre and post-shift movement in large facilities. Mr. Amarone asks that if the committee is to pass the bill, he would like to see amendments to the language which; codifies security screening time as compensable while incorporating federal Portal-to-Portal Act exclusions, recognizes a reasonable de minimis standard for brief, provides a safe harbor from liquidated damages for employers who demonstrate good faith, and eliminates retroactive liability for conduct before the bills effective date.

**David Golembeski, GC Superintendent Newtown Country Club, Govt Relations Chair- GC Supt-CT Association of GC Superintendents** – submits testimony regarding Section 3, which addresses creating a task force to study heat safety in the workplace. As there are numerous industries that could be affected, Mr. Golembeski asks that if this legislation moves forward that there is representation from all facets of the green industry and particularly golf courses to ensure fair and equitable involvement.

**Terence Stovall, Manager, State & Local Govt Affairs (NALP)** – writes to request their inclusion in the participation process of the task force to study and provide suggestions for the establishment of heat safety standards in the workplace. The National Association of Landscape Professionals place worker safety as the top priority within their operations. They maintain a partnership with OSHA and as of 2026 there isn't a specific federal OSHA standard addressing heat. OSHA is in the process of finalizing a proposed rule on heat injury and illness prevention. Heat safety legislation has rapidly increased. In the last two years eighteen states proposed workplace temperature protection policies. While most proposed legislation focuses on heat protections, there is a growing trend toward policies addressing both extreme heat and extreme cold working conditions and NALP is looking forward to providing any assistance or industry perspective that may be helpful.

**Reported by: Olivia Buczak and Jacqueline Olsen    Date: 3/27/2026**