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## **Bereavement Bill Continues to Upset and Concern Business Community**

I heard from many of our members in response to my last newsletter article, in which I wrote about the bereavement bill that was passed the last day of session. This single issue has been by far the most responsive issue from the membership in the last legislative session, which begs the question even more why it was passed the last day and so late in the night if there was to be such a push back from the business community.

As an update, the bill, which overwhelmingly passed in both the Senate and Assembly, has yet to hit the Governor's desk. Once it is delivered, the Governor will have 10 days to sign or veto the bill. Governor Cuomo has not given a position on the legislation publicly at this time. It is my hope that the Governor will take time to review the overwhelming response from the business community on the unintended consequences from this bill, which expands the paid family leave act that went into effect on January 1, to include bereavement. The paid family leave grants employees up to 12 weeks of paid leave at a percentage of their salaries for circumstances such as the birth or adoption of a child.

While employers have concerns and empathy for employees in their time of need, there is significant concern in the span of time the bill entitles an employee too, as well as the vague details within the legislation. For example, there is no specified restriction on when employees can choose to take their leave after the family member's death. Additionally, most employers already have their own bereavement policy and are frustrated by the State imposing yet another mandate on how they operate their business.

The timing of the bill also comes into question amongst employers, and many of them have turned to the State when giving their explanation: the paid family leave act was only effective January 1, and as part of this implementation, it was assured by the State that an economic assessment of the bill and its impact would be executed and released. The State Department of Financial Services is currently working on this assessment and it will not be released until September. Many employers are seemingly frustrated that an addition so significant as bereavement leave up to twelve weeks would be added to the paid family leave, without consideration of the study and its results being seen by the State prior.

The bereavement bill will be a significant topic discussed at our upcoming Central Upstate Manufacturing Breakfast on October 16th. I would like to encourage you and your business to join us for the Central Upstate Manufacturing Legislative Breakfast. Central and Upstate elected officials will be joining us to help better understand the implications of this bill, and the many other mandates imposed on businesses. In the meantime, please contact me on ways you would like to get engaged as we continue to oppose this bill and encourage Governor Cuomo to veto it.

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