

**Drew D. McLeod, FMP, Director of Field Operations  
& Regional Development  
The Original Brooklyn Water Bagel & Pizza Co.**

Hello, my name is Drew McLeod. I am the Director of Field Operations and Regional Development for Brooklyn Water Enterprises, DBA as The Original Brooklyn Water Bagel Company. We have 19 locations, in 5 states, with over 350 employees. And we have 4 more under construction, 3 of which are in Florida.

At The Original Brooklyn Water Bagel Company, we bring the taste of New York to those who have not gotten a chance to visit the Big Apple. We have just recently opened our largest operation to date here in Tallahassee at the new College Town development.

We are excited about the success of our concept and have goals to expand to over 100 locations in the 3 – 5 years, a fairly aggressive growth curve. Florida is certainly a big part of are plans for expansion, as our corporate HQ are located in Boca Raton and the highest concentration of our operations is in FL.

Without the paid leave preemption law, passed by the Legislature in 2013, The Original Brooklyn Water Bagel Company was looking at a potential compliance nightmare in Florida.

With 67 counties in the state, you can imagine the patchwork of regulations that businesses would've had to comply with. When a local government mandates employee benefits, the compliance question creates another layer of bureaucracy – particularly for companies like ours that would operate in multi-county settings.

Uniformity is one of the keystones to a successful business atmosphere here in Florida. For restaurants, all regulations are done at the state level, primarily through DBPR. This streamline in the regulatory process is one of the key reasons businesses are looking to expand here in Florida.

The Original Brooklyn Water Bagel Company is certainly not opposed to offering employee benefits. Our employees are the biggest asset and we believe happy employees are the key to a successful business. It is certainly in our best interest to provide benefits whenever possible.

We have a unique blend of full time employees and part-time employees, including many students here in Tallahassee. We offer our full time employees the following benefits: health insurance, free meals and paid

vacations, and our part time employees the following benefits: health insurance and free meals.

We understand the paid leave preemption law does not prohibit paid leave or any other employee benefit, it merely provides uniformity at the state level. We do not believe that the state need set minimum mandatory employer-sponsored benefits.

Government should not mandate the relationship between employees and employers. Business is best served by free enterprise, including freedom to negotiate in the labor market.

Lastly, profit margins have dwindled significantly over the past few years for a number of reasons – the economy, the Gulf Oil spill, regulatory compliance costs just to name a few – all of which has impacted most of these panelists in one way or another – and the last our industry needs is MORE regulation. The hospitality industry is a \$71B boost to Florida's economy and the largest employer. Do we really want to impose more restrictions on our ability to grow when we're finally beginning to recover? I think not!

Preemption is good for the state and will continue to provide a healthy environment for new business and job growth.