

January 31, 2014

Dear Member of Congress:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to support the Healthy Families Act (H.R.1286/S.631) a common sense bill that would allow workers to earn up to seven paid sick days a year to recover from short-term illnesses like the flu, access preventive care, care for a sick family member or seek assistance related to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. Without paid sick days, workers are forced to make impossible choices when illness strikes: stay home, lose pay and risk their jobs; or go to work sick, risk their health and spread disease to their co-workers and communities. Establishing a national paid sick days standard will help make businesses and governments more efficient while giving working families more financial stability — leading to a stronger economy for all.

No one should face the impossible choice between caring for their health and keeping their paycheck or job. But more than 43 million workers — nearly four in 10 private sector workers — must make this decision every time illness strikes because they don't have access to earned paid sick days.¹ And millions more lack paid sick time to care for a sick child or other family member. Working families need the job and economic security paid sick days provide.

The lack of paid sick days is acute in jobs requiring frequent contact with the public — with potentially grave public health consequences. Three in four food preparation and service workers don't have a single paid sick day.² Without paid sick days, workers are forced to take unpaid leave or work sick. In the restaurant industry, the result is that nearly two-thirds of servers and cooks report that they have served or cooked while ill.³ This puts workers, customers and businesses in danger. Similarly, the vast majority of workers in child care centers and nursing homes cannot earn paid sick days.⁴ When these workers have no choice but to work sick, they risk spreading contagious diseases to the very young and the very old.

Ensuring all workers can earn paid sick days will significantly reduce public expenditures. Workers without paid sick days are more likely to seek treatment at an emergency department because they can't take time off to get care during regular business hours.⁵ A 2011 study found that if all workers had paid sick days, 1.3 million emergency room visits could be prevented each year, saving \$1.1 billion annually. More than half of these savings — \$517 million — would accrue to taxpayer-funded health insurance programs such as Medicare, Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program.⁶

Businesses benefit when their employees have access to paid sick days. When sick workers are able to stay home, the spread of disease slows and workplaces are both healthier and more productive. Plus, workers recover faster from illness and obtain timely medical care — enabling them to get back to work more quickly and holding down health care costs. Paid sick days also reduce “presenteeism”, the productivity lost when employees work sick, which is estimated to cost our national economy \$160 billion annually and surpasses the cost of absenteeism.⁷ In addition, workers who earn paid sick days are 28 percent less likely

than workers who don't earn paid sick days to be injured on the job — with an even greater difference among workers in high-risk occupations.⁸

Paid sick days enable working parents to care for their children when they are sick — shortening child recovery time and reducing community contagion. Unfortunately, more than half of working parents are unable to earn even a few paid sick days to use to care for a sick child.⁹ Parents without paid sick days are more than twice as likely as parents with paid sick days to send a sick child to school or day care.¹⁰ When parents have no choice but to do so, children's health and educational attainment is put at risk — as is the health of classmates, teachers and child care providers.

Paid sick days policies have been enacted successfully at the state and local levels.

Connecticut, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Seattle have all successfully implemented paid sick days laws, and in 2013, Portland, Oregon and New York City have become the latest cities to pass paid sick days. San Francisco's paid sick days law has been in place since 2007. Since its passage, the number of businesses and jobs in the city has increased relative to the surrounding five counties without paid sick days laws.¹¹ And workers and their families have benefitted with little to no burden on employers.¹² The momentum for paid sick days policies is growing in states and cities across the country, but illness knows no geographic boundaries and access to paid sick days should not be dependent on where a worker is employed. That is why the national paid sick days standard proposed in the Healthy Families Act is so important.

The Healthy Families Act would:

- Allow workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven job-protected paid sick days each year to be used to recover from their own illness, access preventive care or provide care for a sick family member;
- Allow workers who are survivors of domestic violence, stalking or sexual assault to use their paid sick days for recovery or to seek assistance; and
- Allow employers that already provide paid sick days or paid time off to maintain their existing policies, as long as they meet the minimums set forth in the bill for amount of time, types of use and method of use.

Working people should not have to risk their financial health when they do what the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urge, and what we all agree is the right thing to do when illness strikes — stay home to recover. Setting a minimum paid sick days standard will be good for America's workers, families, communities and businesses. When people have the financial and job security they need, our economy gets stronger.

We urge you to demonstrate your strong commitment to our nation's working families by becoming a co-sponsor of the Healthy Families Act. Thank you.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

National Partnership for Women & Families

9to5

A Better Balance: The Work and Family Legal Center
African American Ministers In Action (AAMIA)
African American Ministers Leadership Council (AAMLC)
Alliance for Children & Families
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
AFL-CIO
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
American Friends Service Committee
American Psychological Association
Business and Professional Women's Foundation
Campaign for Community Change
Caring Across Generations
Center for American Progress Action Fund
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW)
Coalition on Human Needs
Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO
Demos
Direct Care Alliance
ECE PolicyWorks
Equal Rights Advocates
Families USA
Family Equality Council
Family Values @ Work Consortium
Feminist Majority
First Focus Campaign for Children
Food Chain Workers Alliance
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Half in Ten
HIV Prevention Justice Alliance
Human Impact Partners
Institute for Science and Human Values
Interfaith Worker Justice
Jewish Women International
Jobs with Justice/American Rights at Work
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
Labor Project for Working Families
Legal Momentum
Legal Voice
LULAC
Main Street Alliance
Maternity Care Coalition
MomsRising
NAACP
National Action Network

National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Mothers' Centers
National Association of Social Workers
National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
National Consumers League
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Council of Women's Organizations
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Employment Law Project (NELP)
National Fatherhood Initiative
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)
National Military Family Association
National Organization for Women (NOW)
National Perinatal Association
National Research Center for Women & Families
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
OWL - The Voice of Midlife and Older Women
Partnership for Working Families
People For the American Way
PICO National Network
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. (PNBC)
Progressive States Network
Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
RESULTS
The Roosevelt Institute
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Trust for America's Health
United Methodist Church
United Neighborhood Centers of America
United Steelworkers (USW)
USAction
Voices for America's Children
Wider Opportunities for Women
Women Employed
Women's Media Center
Working America
Young Invincibles

State and Local Organizations

Alabama

AAUW of Alabama

Alaska

AAUW of Alaska

Arizona

AAUW of Arizona

Navajo Nation Breastfeeding Coalition

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Phoenix

Sun City/West Valley National Organization for Women

Arkansas

AAUW of Arkansas

Little Rock National Organization for Women

California

9to5 California

AAUW of California

Before and After Baby

Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center

Restaurant Opportunities Center Bay Area

Restaurant Opportunities Center Los Angeles

Colorado

9to5 Colorado

AAUW of Colorado

Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition

Colorado Fiscal Institute

Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)

FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities

Interfaith Worker Justice Committee of Colorado

NAACP Colorado/Montana/Wyoming State Conference

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Denver

Connecticut

AAUW of Connecticut

Connecticut Working Families Party

Delaware

AAUW of Delaware

District of Columbia

Christ Our Redeemer AME Church

District of Columbia Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.

Pilgrim Baptist Church

Restaurant Opportunities Center Washington, DC

Florida

AAUW of Florida
Broward County Chapter of the National Organization for Women
Farmworker Association of Florida
Florida Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.

Miami-Dade Coalition for Healthy Families and Workplaces
Restaurant Opportunities Center Miami
Tampa Chapter of the National Organization for Women

Georgia

9to5 Atlanta
AAUW of Georgia
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Atlanta

Hawaii

AAUW of Hawaii

Illinois

AAUW of Illinois
Action Now
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
Arise Chicago
Chicago Women's AIDS Project
Federation of College Clerical and Technical Personnel, Local 1708, AFT, IFT, AFL-CIO
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights
Human Action Community Organization (HACO)
Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition
National Council of Jewish Women, Illinois State Public Affairs Committee
ParentsWork
Restaurant Opportunities Center Chicago
SEIU Healthcare Illinois & Indiana

Indiana

AAUW of Indiana
Community, Faith & Labor Coalition
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Indianapolis

Iowa

AAUW of Iowa
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Iowa

Kansas

AAUW of Kansas
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.

Kentucky

AAUW of Kentucky
Lactation Improvement Network of Kentucky

Louisiana

AAUW of Louisiana
Louisiana Breastfeeding Coalition
Restaurant Opportunities Center New Orleans

Maine

AAUW of Maine
Maine Women's Lobby

Maryland

AAUW of Maryland
Baltimore National Organization for Women
Job Opportunities Task Force
The Prince of Peace Baptist Church, Baltimore
Public Justice Center
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Baltimore

Massachusetts

AAUW of Massachusetts
Jewish Alliance for Law & Social Action
Massachusetts Paid Leave Coalition
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Boston
St. Paul A.M.E. Church

Michigan

AAUW of Michigan
Metro-Detroit Chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women
Oakland/Macomb Michigan National Organization for Women
Restaurant Opportunities Center Michigan

Minnesota

AAUW of Minnesota
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of the Twin
Cities
Uptown National Organization for Women

Mississippi

AAUW of Mississippi

Missouri

AAUW of Missouri

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Kansas City
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of St. Louis

Montana

AAUW of Montana

Nebraska

AAUW of Nebraska

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Omaha

Nevada

AAUW of Nevada

New Hampshire

NH Sisters of Solidarity

New Jersey

AAUW of New Jersey

Grace Cathedral Family Worship Center, Inc.

New Jersey Citizen Action

New Jersey Tenants Organization

Northern NJ Chapter of the National Organization for Women

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of New Jersey

New Mexico

AAUW of New Mexico

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Albuquerque

New York

AAUW of New York

Academy of Women's Health

Catalyst

Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC)

Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition

New York Paid Leave Coalition

New York State Nurses Association

Restaurant Opportunities Center New York

North Carolina

AAUW of North Carolina

Fayetteville National Organization for Women

North Carolina Justice Center

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of North Carolina

North Dakota

AAUW of North Dakota

Ohio

AAUW of Ohio

Akron Area National Organization for Women

National Organization for Women, Greater Cleveland Chapter

Ohio National Organization for Women

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Cincinnati

Southeast Seventh-day Adventist Church

Woodland Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Zion Hill Missionary Baptist

Oklahoma

AAUW of Oklahoma

Oregon

AAUW of Oregon

Central Oregon Coast National Organization for Women

Family Forward Oregon

Pennsylvania

Institute for the Advancement of Working Families

Micah Leadership Council

New Hope Baptist Church

PathWays PA

Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses & Allied Professionals (PASNAP)

Pennsylvania Council of Churches

Pittsburgh UNITED

Restaurant Opportunities Center Philadelphia

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Pittsburgh

Southwestern Pennsylvania Coalition of Labor Union of Women

Women's Law Project

Rhode Island

AAUW of Rhode Island

Rhode Island Breastfeeding Coalition

South Carolina

AAUW of South Carolina

South Dakota

AAUW of South Dakota

Tennessee

AAUW of Tennessee

ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Memphis

Texas

AAUW of Texas
Equal Justice Center
North Dallas National Organization for Women
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Dallas
Workers Defense Project

Utah

AAUW of Utah

Vermont

AAUW of Vermont
Voices for Vermont's Children

Virginia

AAUW of Virginia
Charlottesville Chapter of the National Organization for Women (CNOW)
NoVA National Organization for Women
Vienna Area National Organization for Women
Virginia Breastfeeding Task Force
Virginia National Organization for Women

Washington

AAUW of Washington
Economic Opportunity Institute
Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Seattle
Statewide Poverty Action Network
Teamsters Local 117
Thurston County Chapter, National Organization for Women
United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 367
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Washington State National Organization for Women
Washington Work and Family Coalition

West Virginia

AAUW of West Virginia

Wisconsin

9to5 Milwaukee
AAUW of Wisconsin
ROC Supporting the Transformation of America's Restaurants (ROC STARS) of Milwaukee
SEIU HealthCare Wisconsin
Wisconsin National Organization for Women
Workers' Rights Center

Wyoming

AAUW of Wyoming

1 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2012, March). *Employee Benefits Survey Table 32. Leave benefits: Access, private industry workers, National Compensation Survey*. Retrieved 25 March 2013, from <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2012/ownership/private/table21a.pdf>; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013, February 1). *Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry sector and selected industry detail, seasonally adjusted (Table B-1a)*. Retrieved 19 February 2013, from <http://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/ceseeb1a.htm> (Unpublished calculation)

² Joint Economic Committee, United States Congress. (2010, March). *Expanding Access to Paid Sick Leave: The Impact of the Healthy Families Act on America's Workers*. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from http://www.jec.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=abf8aca7-6b94-4152-b720-2d8d04b81ed6

3 Restaurant Opportunities Centers United. (2010, September 30). *Serving While Sick: High Risks and Low Benefits for the Nation's Restaurant Workforce, and Their Impact on the Consumer*. Restaurant Opportunities Centers United publication. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from <http://roconited.org/roc-serving-while-sick/>

4 Hartmann, H. (2007, February 13). *The Healthy Families Act: Impact on Workers, Business, The Economy and Public Health*. Testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from <http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Hartmann.pdf>

5 Smith, T., & Kim, J. (2010, June). *Paid Sick Days: Attitudes and Experiences*. National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago for the Public Welfare Foundation publication. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from <http://www.publicwelfare.org/resources/DocFiles/psd2010final.pdf>

6 Miller, K., Williams, C., & Yi, Y. (2011, October 31). *Paid Sick Days and Health: Cost Savings from Reduced Emergency Department Visits*. Institute for Women's Policy Research publication. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/paid-sick-days-and-health-cost-savings-from-reduced-emergency-department-visits/>

7 Stewart, W. et al. (2003, December). Lost Productive Health Time Costs from Health Conditions in the United States: Results from the American Productivity Audit. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 45. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from http://www.workhealth.org/whatsnew/whnewrap/Stewart%20etal_lost%20productive%20work%20time%20costs%20from%20health%20conditions%20in%20the%20US_%20Results%20from%20the%20American%20Productivity%20Audit%202003.pdf

8 Asfaw, A., et al. (2012, September). Paid Sick Leave and Nonfatal Occupational Injuries. *American Journal of Public Health*, 102(9), e59-e64. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2011.300482>

9 Smith, K., & Schaefer, A. (2012, June). *Who Cares for the Sick Kids? Parents' Access to Paid Time to Care for a Sick Child*. Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire publication. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from <http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/sites/carseyinstitute.unh.edu/files/publications/IB-Smith-Paid-Sick-Leave-2012.pdf>

¹⁰ See note 5.

¹¹ Petro, J. (2010, October). *Paid Sick Leave Does Not Harm Business Growth or Job Growth*. Drum Major Institute for Public Policy publication. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from http://paysickdays.nationalpartnership.org/site/DocServer/Petro_DML_Paid_Sick_Leave_Does_Not_Harm_2010_Unabbr_.pdf?docID=7721

¹² Drago, R. & Lovell, V. (2011, February). *San Francisco's Paid Sick Leave Ordinance: Outcomes for Employers and Employees*. Institute for Women's Policy Research publication. Retrieved 19 March 2013, from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/San-Fran-PSD>