



April 6, 2016

Los Angeles Economic Development Committee
c/o Office of the City Clerk
200 N. Spring St., Room 470
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attn: Adam Lid, Legislative Assistant

Re: Council File 14-1371- Follow-up Policy Elements for a Citywide Minimum Wage

Honorable Councilmembers,

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California strongly supports a Los Angeles citywide paid sick days law, with a broad family definition. As a civil rights organization, we recognize paid sick days as crucial to both economic justice and reproductive justice of our city's workers.

No one working a full-time job should be paid a wage that leaves them living in poverty. For that reason, the Los Angeles City Council is to be congratulated on passing an ordinance raising the minimum wage in the city to \$15 by 2020.

At the same time, no one working a full-time job should have to choose between paying their rent and remaining at home when they or their dependents are ill. That is why we urge city council to adopt a measure providing paid sick days to workers. California passed a law in 2014 giving three paid sick days to workers across the state. While this law represents progress, three paid sick days are simply not enough. San Francisco and Oakland are but two of the major cities that have passed ordinances giving workers five to nine sick days - and L.A. should follow suit.

Many of L.A.'s low-income workers are parents or family caregivers. Paid sick days uphold reproductive justice and gender equity for these workers. Reproductive justice means being able to work and take care of yourself and your family. It means not having to choose between caring for a sick child and keeping the job that is crucial to your family's wellbeing. To this end, workers who have access to sick days are more likely to receive regular well-care, cancer screenings, and prenatal care.

We urge the committee to adopt a law that not only allows workers to use their sick time to care for family members (as is provided for under the state law), but also that adopts a broader and more appropriate definition of "family member" as any individual who is related to the worker

Executive Director Hector O. Villagra

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either by “blood or affinity.” The federal government has adopted this definition in its recent executive order requiring federal contractors to provide their employees with paid sick time.

The diversity of Los Angeles families requires this definition so that paid sick days work for all workers. This definition reflects what we know – that families are not one-size-fits-all and often have multigenerational caregiving needs. Further, we know that this federal family definition works because the right to take care of individuals related by affinity - especially those who may not have any biological or legal family, who are emotionally or geographically close to us - is inclusive and extended to our LGBTQ families.

The ACLU of Southern California respectfully asks that the committee support a strong local paid sick days law, with a “blood or affinity” family definition, without delay. It is essential for a just Los Angeles that supports economic and reproductive justice for our workers.

Sincerely,



Ruth Dawson
Staff Attorney
LGBTQ, Gender & Reproductive Justice Project
ACLU of Southern California

