



National Council of Jewish Women
Los Angeles Section

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March 30, 2016

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

Secretary
Anita Aratow

Attn: Adam Lid, Legislative Assistant

Treasurer
C. Jean Pearlstein

Parliamentarian
Peggy Schwartz

Re: Council File 14-1731- Follow-up Policy Elements for a Citywide Minimum Wage

Board of Directors
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Sylvia Brown
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Susan Pinkus
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Renée Tener-Hertzberg
Ruth Zeitzev

Honorable Councilmembers,

The National Council of Jewish Women/Los Angeles strongly supports a Los Angeles citywide paid sick days law. NCJW/LA is a section of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideals into action. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW strives for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children, and families and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms.

NCJW/LA serves more than 12,000 individuals through our Community Mental Health and Supportive Services, Scholarships, Talkline, Youth Educational Programs and Services, Back 2 School Store, intern training programs and our clothing assistance projects.

Executive Director
Hillary Selvin

We urge the Economic Development Committee to advance a paid sick days law that provides robust protections for LA workers that are on par with their counterparts in San Francisco, Oakland, Emeryville, and Santa Monica. There is compelling evidence supporting the benefits of paid sick days for workers' health, employers, and the local economy.

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Prior to the 2014 passage of California's Healthy Workplace, Healthy Families Act (AB 1522), nearly half of LA's private sector workers – more than 650,000 – lacked access to even a single day of paid sick time.

Under the new law, most of these workers now have access to up to three days of sick time – an important step forward, but an insufficient one. According to the Centers for Disease Control, a person with an uncomplicated case of the flu may need between three and seven days to recover, and may be contagious for five to seven days after becoming ill. A local law that guarantees workers more sick days than the state law currently prescribes would help to keep LA families, workplaces, and communities healthy and productive.

It is crucial that the city 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 that adopts a broader and more appropriate definition of “family member” as any individual who is related to the worker 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.

In addition to the benefits of paid sick days for workers and families, businesses and the economy are better off with these laws. Surveys of San Francisco and Connecticut employers found that they did not experience negative effects as a result of their respective paid sick days laws. In the District of Columbia, an audit found no evidence that sick days caused businesses to leave the city. And economic data from Seattle, Connecticut, San Francisco, and New York City, where workers earn 5 to 9 paid sick days per year, show that their economies have thrived since the passage of their sick days laws.

Please act quickly to pass a strong paid sick days law that guarantees workers a sufficient number of sick days and the ability to care for family members who are related by blood or affinity.

Sincerely,

Donna Benjamin, Vice President of Advocacy

Cipra Nemeth, Vice President of Legislative and Community Engagement

Maya Paley, Director of Legislative and Community Engagement