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April 5, 2016

Dear Los Angeles City Council Members,

Los Angeles has the opportunity to build on the state's paid sick days law and pass a local ordinance with stronger protections for all workers and families. On behalf of 9to5, National Association of Working Women and our California members and constituents, we urge you to set a new standard by passing a strong earned sick and safe time law, and we particularly urge you to ensure that the definition of family in the bill reflects the reality that today's families come in all shapes and sizes.

9to5 is a national membership organization of low-wage women, founded in 1973. We have active chapters in Los Angeles and San Jose, and members throughout the state of California. 9to5 works to improve policy on employment and economic security issues that directly affect our members and constituents. The lack of paid sick days and its impact on family economic security is one of those issues.

Los Angeles should lead the state on paid sick days, and it now has the opportunity to set the new standard. Current California law allows most workers to earn only up to 3 paid sick days. There is significant room and urgent need for LA to go beyond this inadequate state floor.

Paid sick days laws ensure that workers can earn paid time to care for their own health needs and for sick family members. An important part of ensuring the most effective paid sick days policy is making sure that the definition of "family" matches the lived realities of our communities and caregiving relationships, so that workers can use their paid sick time to take care of their loved ones. Our families take many forms, including blended families (such as step-parents, step-siblings, and other step-relatives), single-parent families, LGBTQ families, chosen families, multi-generational families, and multi-national families. In Los Angeles County, it is estimated that there are nearly 413,540 LGBTQ adults, and far too many of these individuals are forced to make impossible choices between recovering from illness or taking home a paycheck. LGBTQ workers and families are particularly impacted by not having access to enough earned safe and sick time.

Earned sick and safe days provide significant benefits to people living with HIV/AIDS and their loved ones. If workers living with HIV/AIDS are unable to take time off to attend medical appointments and recover from illness, their health, economic security, and housing stability may be jeopardized. Earned sick and safe days also support people living with HIV/AIDS by ensuring their loved ones can take time off from work to provide care when necessary.

Earned sick and safe time laws have passed around the country, and research shows they are working well. In addition to improving the health of the community, earned sick and safe time laws strengthen businesses by lowering turnover, decreasing the spread of illness in the workplace, and improving worker morale, productivity, and health. 9to5 strongly supports the passage of an earned sick and safe time law in Los Angeles and urges the City Council to pass a model policy that broadly defines family.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Cathleen R. Deppe in cursive.

Cathleen R. Deppe, Legislative Policy Chair  
9to5, National Association of Working Women  
Los Angeles Chapter

Handwritten signature of Linda A. Meric in cursive.

Linda A. Meric, National Executive Director  
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