



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 National Partnership for Women & Families strongly supports a Los Angeles citywide paid sick days law. We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C. For more than four decades, we have fought for every major federal policy advance that has helped women and families. We promote fairness in the workplace, reproductive health and rights, access to quality, affordable health care, and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. For more than a decade we have provided policy and technical assistance related to paid sick days. We have helped develop policy in dozens of jurisdictions, including in nearly all of the jurisdictions that have adopted paid sick days laws. We have also studied and analyzed the impacts of the paid sick days laws, the concerns that are often raised and that have been proven unfounded, and we understand the positive impacts that these laws have had.

We urge the Economic Development Committee to advance a paid sick days law that provides robust protections for Los Angeles workers that are on par with their counterparts in other California cities. Prior to the 2014 passage of California's Healthy Workplace, Healthy Families Act (AB 1522), nearly half of Los Angeles private sector workers – more than 650,000 – lacked access to even a single day of paid sick time.¹ Under the new law, many 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 and Prevention, 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.² Sick employees who have inadequate time to recuperate risk working at reduced capacity, a problem known as presenteeism that costs the national economy \$160 billion annually (\$206.6 billion after adjusting for inflation),³ or spreading illness. A local law that guarantees workers more sick days than the state law currently provides would help to keep Los Angeles families, workplaces and communities healthy and productive.

It is important 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 the city adopt a definition of "family member" that includes individuals to whom the worker is related by "blood or affinity." The federal government allows its workers to use paid sick time to care for individuals to whom they are related by "blood or affinity,"⁴ and President Obama's



recent executive order requiring federal contractors to provide their employees with paid sick time includes this language as well.⁵

In addition to the benefits of paid sick days for workers and families, businesses and the economy also benefit from these laws. Surveys of San Francisco⁶ and Connecticut⁷ 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.⁸ And economic data from San Francisco, Connecticut, Seattle 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.⁹

We urge you to 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 individuals to whom they are related by blood or affinity.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fleisch Fink
Senior Policy Counsel
National Partnership for Women & Families

1 Milli, J., & Ulbina, D. (2015, April). *Access to Paid Sick Time in Los Angeles, California*. Institute for Women's Policy Research Publication. Retrieved 31 March 2016, from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/access-to-paid-sick-time-in-los-angeles-california/>

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015, January 26). *Clinical Signs and Symptoms of Influenza*. Retrieved 31 March 2016, from <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/acip/clinical.htm>

3 Stewart, W. F., Ricci, J. A., Chee, E., & Morganstein, D. (2003, December). Lost Productive Work Time Costs from Health Conditions in the United States: Results From the American Productivity Audit. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 45(12), 1234-1246. Retrieved 5 April 2016, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/psd/lost-productive-work-time-american-productivity-audit.pdf> (Unpublished calculation based on \$226 billion annually in lost productivity, 71 percent due to presenteeism.)

4 U.S. Office of Personnel Management. (n.d.). *Fact Sheet: Definitions Related to Family Member and Immediate Relative for Purposes of Sick Leave, Funeral Leave, Voluntary Leave Transfer, Voluntary Leave Bank, and Emergency Leave Transfer*. Retrieved 5 April 2016, from <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/definitions-related-to-family-member-and-immediate-relative-for-purposes-of-sick-leave/>

5 Exec. Order No. 13,706, 80 Fed. Reg. 54,697 (Sept. 10, 2015).

6 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 1 April 2016, from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/San-Fran-PSD>

7 Appelbaum, E., Milkman, R., Elliott, L., & Kroeger, T. (2014, March). *Good for Business? Connecticut's Paid Sick Leave Law*. Center for Economic and Policy Research and The Murphy Institute at the City University of New York Publication. Retrieved 5 April 2016, from <http://cepr.net/documents/good-for-buisness-2014-02-21.pdf>

8 Branche, Y. (2013, June 19). *Audit of the Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act of 2008*. Office of the District of Columbia Auditor Publication. Retrieved 1 April 2016, from <http://www.dcauditor.org/sites/default/files/DCA092013.pdf>

9 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2015, November). *Paid Sick Days: Low Cost, High Reward for Workers, Employers and Communities*. Retrieved 1 April 2016, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/psd/paid-sick-days-low-cost-high-reward.pdf>