



Healthy Families Act

To be re-introduced by Senator Patty Murray and Representative Rosa DeLauro

BACKGROUND

- Currently, at least 41 million American workers do not have a single paid sick day.
- Nearly one in four adults report they have lost a job or have been threatened with job loss because they needed sick time for themselves or to care for a sick child or relative according to a 2010 study by the University of Chicago.
- The Healthy Families Act would allow workers to earn seven paid sick days so that they can address the health needs of their families and themselves.

ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

- Nearly 39 jurisdictions have or will have paid sick days laws. Employer support for paid sick days in NYC is 86% with 96% indicating no loss in productivity or an increase.
- A typical family without paid sick days loses their entire monthly food budget after the loss of a little over 3 days of pay.
- Paid sick days reduce turnover costs, accidents and decrease the productivity loss due to illness as well as reducing health care costs due to decreased emergency room use.

BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE HFA:

- Just like the Family and Medical Leave Act, the HFA provides job-protected sick leave.
- Under the HFA, workers can take paid sick time to care for ill family members – something that many employers do not allow under their current sick leave policies.
- Providing paid sick days to workers will help to improve public health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that workers stay home when they are sick with common illnesses like the flu. Workers who lack paid sick days are more likely to go to work sick and to send sick children to day care or school. Jurisdictions with paid sick days saw an up to 20% reduction in influenza transmission.

WHY WOMEN WORKERS SHOULD CARE:

- The industries that employ the most women – retail, accommodations and food service – are the *least* likely to offer paid sick days.
- Women workers are more likely to have significant family care giving responsibilities. Half of working mothers miss work when their child gets sick. Among low-income mothers, two in three report loss in pay when they take time off.
- The HFA provides paid leave for workers to recover from the trauma of domestic violence. With paid 'safe' days, victims of domestic violence can take time away from work to ensure their safety, seek treatment and pursue legal options.

MYTHS ABOUT THE HFA:

- *Myth: workers don't need paid sick days, they can use paid vacation days.*
Fact: Most workers who lack paid sick days also lack paid vacation days.
- *Myth: Business will be bankrupted if forced to comply with a paid sick days law.*
Fact: Without paid sick days policies, businesses face high turnover, spend more on hiring and training new workers, have higher accident rates and risk spreading illness to customers and co-workers.
- *Myth: Paid sick days policy would force employers to cut wages of workers.*
Fact: Much like the minimum wage increase, a paid sick days policy can be implemented without negative business impacts.

For more information, please contact: Coalition of Labor Union Women

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