

From: Lindsay DesLauriers [lindsay@mainstreetalliance.org]
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2016 12:21 PM
To: Pepper, James
CC: Rebecca Ramos
Subject: Sick Leave Bill Info and Request
Attachments: H.187 Summary as passed sen econ.docx; H.187 Talking Points.docx

Hi James,

Thank you for all your help with this.

Our major request is for the Governor to call Senators Sears and Kitchel over the weekend.

We are mobilizing constituent contacts to all Senators and there are also a handful of calls that we expect will go out from the WH to targeted Senators.

I'm attaching the latest bill summary that reflects the changes made in committee and our key talking points.

Thank you again. Please let us know if the Governor isn't able to make these calls so we can work on another strategy.

Lindsay

Lindsay DesLauriers, Director
Main Street Alliance - Vermont
(802) 343-7423

www.mainstreetalliance.org/vermont

Summary of H.187 as Passed Senate Economic Development

- **Employees in Vermont could earn up to a maximum of 24 hours (3 days) per year for the first two years after implementation.** Following this two-year phase in, employees would gain access up to a ceiling of 40 hours (5 days) per year.
 - **Employers may require a waiting period for new hires of 2080 hours or 1 year, whichever comes first.** During this probationary period employees would accrue, but not have access to earned time.
 - **Temporary and seasonal employees are excluded from this legislation, defined as 20 weeks.**
 - **Part-time workers who work fewer than 18 hours per week are excluded.**
 - **New businesses will have a one-year grace period starting from the the date of their first hire.**
 - Full and part-time employees must earn the equivalent of at least: 1 hour of paid time for every 52 hours worked.
 - Employees must be permitted to use this time to:
 - Recover from or receive treatment for an illness or injury,
 - Care for a family member when they are ill,
 - Obtain diagnostic, routine, preventive, or therapeutic health care,
 - Take necessary steps for their safety as a result of sexual abuse, domestic violence, or stalking.
 - **All employers already offering equal or more generous paid time, combined time, paid sick time, or any type of paid leave that can be used for the purposes defined in the law (as listed above) would be unaffected.** The law *would NOT* require a discrete paid sick time policy in addition to other paid time provided by the employer. Likewise, employers who aren't currently meeting the minimum standard may meet the requirement with the same flexibility.
 - **Employers' own policies determine the time increments by which workers may use their sick time.** For example, if an employer has a policy requiring workers to take at least half a day of time when they are absent, that policy stands for the purposes of this legislation.
 - Tipped employees would be compensated at no less than the minimum wage for non-tipped employees.
 - Employers may require employees to make reasonable efforts to find a replacement for planned absences and avoid scheduling routine or preventive health care during work hours.
 - If unused hours are carried over from a previous year, an employee may earn the balance between the unused portion and the maximum allowed.
 - Employers are *not* required to cash out unused paid sick time when an employee leaves the job.
 - Act would take effect on January 1st of the year following passage.
-

H.187 Healthy Workplaces Bill

- **The goal of this bill** has been to articulate a minimum standard of earned time off that would be functional and flexible for businesses without compromising the fundamental objectives that the Paid Sick Days Coalition has been working to address.

Here are some of the bigger changes:

1. The bill establishes a significant waiting period before new employees have access to the benefit. (Current draft in Senate Committee is 1 year)
 2. Smaller amount of time. Employees will be able to earn three days per year for the first two years of the law then, after that, up to five days per year.
 3. Seasonal and temporary workers are excluded from this legislation.
- **Without access to paid time off, parents are often forced to choose between their family's financial stability and their children's health.**
 - Nearly 60,000 Vermonters do not have access to any paid time off whatsoever.
 - A recent UVM study shows that Vermont children are 15% more likely to have seen a doctor within the past year if their parents have at least 3 paid days off.
 - About 3/4 of Vermont families with children under age 12 have all adults in the workforce.

- **The majority of Vermont households rely on two incomes to meet their basic needs.** Unless we ensure that parents have the flexibility to manage their responsibilities at work and at home, **children** are significantly less likely to access regular health care, regardless of their access to health insurance. The bill will also help **seniors** lead healthier lives because their caregivers will be able to afford to take them to the doctor or care for them during an illness.
- **This is a public health issue.** Food service is the business sector least likely to provide paid time off to employees and retail is a close second. In short, it is the sectors that come into greatest contact with the public that are least likely to provide paid time off.

When employees go to work sick, other employees and patrons get sick. When children go to school sick, other children and staff get sick. **This is how epidemics spread.** When we give people the ability to stay at home when sick, we are also giving our community the means to drastically slow the transmission of influenza and other contagious diseases.

- **Vermont's economy is built on stable, tight-knit communities and successful small businesses.** One of the best ways to get our local economy going is to keep money in the pockets of Vermonters so that we can spend it in Vermont; Paid leave helps Vermonters keep their jobs and their income when either they or a family member get sick or need to see a doctor.