

MOTION

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COVID-19, which was initially detected in China in December, has since spread to at least a 110 countries worldwide. In the US, there are now over 1000 cases of COVID-19. The outbreak in the US has led to states of emergency being declared, events and campaign rallies being cancelled and schools and college campuses being shut down. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended social distancing, working from home or staying home when you're not feeling well. While these guidelines are helpful, for the working poor it is difficult, if not impossible, to abide by. Most of these families live paycheck t paycheck and cannot afford to miss work.

On March 10, 2020 a Walmart employee in Kentucky tested positive for COVID-19. In an effort to ensure that that employee, and any other employee who may test positive for the virus, is able to take time off without causing financial turmoil for their family, Walmart launched an emergency leave program. The program, which is available for its 1.4 million employees across the country, provides up to two weeks paid time off if an employee is required to be quarantined by the government or the store, or if the employee tests positive for COVID-19. Other businesses are also stepping up to offer similar benefits to their employees. However, access to paid time off during a public health crisis or disaster shouldn't depend on the generosity of your employer.

In recognition of this, H.R. 6201 was introduced in Congress. The legislation would require all employers to provide at least 14 days of sick leave during a public health crisis. In addition the bill, would ensure paid time off when a child's school is closed due to a public health crisis, when an employer closes down the workplace due to the crisis, or when a family member is quarantined. While it appears that Congress will pass the bill, there are gaps in the current legislation that would potentially leave out low-wage workers and families living paycheck to paycheck. The City of Los Angeles, with its Families First agenda, needs to affirm that every family has access to these benefits. Low-wage workers are the most vulnerable during a public health crisis or major disaster. They shouldn't have to choose between their job and livelihood or the public health and their personal health. City of Los Angeles must ensure that families and low-wage workers are protected during this public health crisis, and other future crises and disasters, as it is important for public health and our economy.

I THEREFORE MOVE that City Council instruct the Chief Legislative Analyst, in consultation with the City Attorney's Office and Bureau of Contract Administration, to assess the proposed federal legislation, and any State legislation on paid leave, for gaps in coverage and report back in 30 days with recommendations for a local emergency leave program that protects all workers, including subcontractors and contracts, and provides 14 days paid leave during a major disaster or public health crisis.

I FURTHER MOVE that City Council instruct City Attorney to report back on whether the City can provide any business tax relief during a major disaster or public health crisis.

or

MAR 17 2020

PRESENTED BY:

NURY MARTINEZ
Councilwoman, 6th District

SECONDED BY:

(SEE COUNCIL FILE NO. 20-0147-S39)