

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: September 12, 2023

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No. 23-0002-S92
Assignment No. 23-09-0480

SUBJECT: Resolution (McOsker –Hernandez) to SUPPORT S.1664 (Sanders-DeLauro), the Healthy Families Act of 2023.

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution (McOsker –Hernandez) to include in the City’s 2023-2024 Federal Legislative Program, SUPPORT for S.1664 (Sanders) to establish a federal sick leave policy for employees to earn a minimum of seven sick days per year.

SUMMARY

Resolution (McOsker –Hernandez), introduced on September 1, 2023, states that the U.S. does not provide nationwide standards for paid time off for short-term illnesses, nor paid leave for family medical needs and emergencies. The Resolution further informs that 34 million U.S. workers, including 25 percent of the private sector workforce and nine percent of the public sector workforce, lack paid sick time. The Resolution also informs that according to a study by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, a universal paid sick leave policy would reduce preventable visits to the emergency room and result in cost savings of \$1.1 billion per year, including \$500 million in savings for public health insurance programs like Medicare and Medicaid. Currently pending before the Senate is S.1664 (Sanders), which would establish a federal paid sick leave policy for employees of businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven job-protected, paid sick days each year to be used to recover from their own illnesses, access preventive care, provide care to a sick family member, or attend school meetings related to a child’s health condition or disability. S.1664 would establish a national, paid sick leave standard, meet the health and financial needs of working families, and benefit the health of businesses and the U.S. economy. The Resolution therefore requests that the City support S.1664.

BACKGROUND

According to the Center for Economic Policy and Research, the U.S. is the only developed country that does not guarantee paid sick leave in any capacity, although 14 states and a number of cities and counties have implemented paid sick leave protections. S.1664 seeks to provide employees up to seven paid or unpaid, job-protected sick days if they become ill, or if they need time to care for a family member or any other “individual related by affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.” Under S.1664, workers would earn a minimum of one hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked, up to 56 hours per year, unless the employer selects a higher limit. The bill would allow employees in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven paid sick days, and employees in businesses with fewer than 15 employees to earn seven job-protected unpaid sick days per year. Employers with existing sick leave policies would not be required to change their procedures, so long as the policy meets minimum legislative standards.

Studies have shown that workers without access to paid sick leave are three times more likely to delay or forgo necessary health care for themselves, and nearly twice as likely to forgo medical care for their family compared to workers with paid sick days. Working while sick also increases a worker's probability of suffering an injury on the job and results in an estimated \$300 billion annually in lost productivity due to illness. Access to paid sick leave also protects healthy workers from infection. Studies show that paid sick leave can reduce the spread of contagious diseases like the flu and COVID-19.

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED

Bureau of Contract Administration

BILL STATUS

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| 7/18/23 | Reported to Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions without amendment. |
| 5/17/23 | Introduced, referred to Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions |



Susan O'Hara
Analyst

Attachment: Resolution (McOskey –Hernandez)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation rules, regulations, or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, today, the United States remains one of the only two major countries in the world that does not provide nationwide paid time off for short-term illnesses, nor paid leave for family and medical needs and emergencies; and

WHEREAS, currently, 34 million workers lack any paid sick time at all, including 25 percent of the private sector workforce and 9 percent of the public sector workforce; and

WHEREAS, according to a study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a universal paid sick days policy would reduce preventable visits to the emergency room and result in cost savings of \$1.1 billion per year, including \$500 million in savings for public health insurance programs like Medicare and Medicaid; and

WHEREAS, S.1664 (Sanders-DeLauro), the "Healthy Families Act of 2023", would allow workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven job-protected paid sick days each year to be used to recover from their own illnesses, access preventive care, provide care to a sick family member, or attend school meetings related to a child's health condition or disability; and

WHEREAS, the Healthy Families Act would set a national paid sick days standard—a critical step toward meeting the health and financial needs of working families, while also benefiting the health of our businesses and the economy; and

WHEREAS, community public health models have proven that paid leave is a powerful tool for assisting with economic growth and mobility as well as promoting equity in our neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, paid sick days policies have been enacted successfully at the state and local levels, without adverse business or economic effects due to employers no longer suffering revenue losses due to lost productivity that occurs when workers are sick on the job; and

WHEREAS, the Healthy Families Act will relieve workers from having to make the untenable decision between caring for themselves or a loved one and losing necessary income, or even losing their job altogether; and

WHEREAS, when illness strikes, it can impact any family's bottom line— working families deserve a national standard:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2023-2024 Federal Legislative Program SUPPORT for S.1664 (Sanders-DeLauro), the Healthy Families Act, which would establish a federal paid sick days policy for employees to earn a minimum of seven paid sick days per year to care for themselves or their families.

PRESENTED BY:

TIM McOSKER

Councilmember, 15th District

SECONDED BY:

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