



Supporting workers, employers  
and the public by allowing workers to earn  
paid sick and safe leave

### HF2461 (Lesch)/SF2105 (Pappas)

- Allow employees to earn one hour of paid sick and safe leave for every thirty hours worked
- Allow broad use of paid leave to care for family and deal with the consequences of violence

### The Facts

- **Women are disproportionately impacted by the lack of paid sick days since they comprise two-thirds of those working for low-wages.** Nearly 40 percent of private sector workers and 80 percent of low-wage workers lacked access to paid sick days in 2011.
- **Scores of Minnesotans, especially low-income women, are forced to make impossible decisions every day: whether to care for loved ones who are ill (or have faced domestic or sexual violence) or to deal with a loss of income and potential backlash at work.** Two-thirds of family caregivers are women, yet 54% of working mothers lack access to even a few paid sick days they can use care for their children or parents.
- **Getting sick has serious economic consequences for workers and their families.** Nearly one-quarter of adults in the U.S. (23 percent) report that they have lost a job or have been threatened with job loss for taking time off due to illness or to care for a sick child or relative.
- **One in five family caregivers (2/3rds of whom are women) left the workforce earlier than planned because of having to care for an ill spouse or family member** - leading to lost wages and retirement savings. Nearly half of employees who took time off work to care for an elderly relative lost income doing so.
- **Adding insult to injury, too many women do not have access to paid time off to deal with the serious legal, medical and emotional consequences of violence** for themselves or loved ones. One in three Minnesota women has been the victim of domestic or sexual violence by the time she reaches middle age.
- **Public health and employer bottom lines suffer when adults and children go to work and school sick because paid time off is not an option.** Adults without access to paid sick days are 1.5 times more likely than adults with paid sick days to report going to work with a contagious illness like the flu or a viral infection. Parents without access to paid sick days are more than twice as likely as parents with paid sick days to send a sick child to school or daycare.
- **Employers benefit from a more committed workforce when employees have paid sick leave.** Numerous studies show when employers offer paid sick time, absenteeism declines and productivity increases.
- **Paid sick days can reduce costs for public health insurance programs.** Workers without paid sick days are more likely to delay or forgo preventative care and to use Emergency rooms after hours. Treatable conditions become more complicated and health care costs increase as a result. A recent study shows that if all workers had paid sick days, 1.3 million emergency room visits could be prevented each year in the U.S.

A national survey conducted for *The Shriver Report* in late 2013 found that an **overwhelming 96 percent of single mothers in the poll say paid leave is the workplace policy that would help them most.**