HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT FACT SHEET

Forty million workers lack access to even a single paid sick day. They lose pay and risk losing their job when they're sick or need to care for a sick loved one. No one should be punished for being a good parent or following doctor's orders. To address this, Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) have introduced the Healthy Families Act, which guarantees workers can earn up to seven paid sick days each year.

What Does the HFA Do?

- Guarantees workers in businesses with 15 or more employees can 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. Workers in businesses with fewer than 15 employees would earn up to seven job-protected unpaid sick days each year to be used for the same reasons, unless their employer chooses to offer paid sick days.
- Recognizes "family" as broadly defined to reflect diverse family arrangements. Workers would be able to use their time when their child, parent, spouse, domestic partner, or other relative to whom the worker has a similarly close relationship is ill, injured, or getting medical care.
- Includes a simple method for calculating accrued sick time. Workers would earn a minimum of one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked, up to 56 hours (seven days) per year, unless their employer selects a higher limit.
- Ensures workers who are victims of domestic violence, stalking or sexual assault can use their paid sick days to recover or seek assistance.
- Allow employers to require certification if an employee uses more than three paid sick days in a row. For victims of domestic violence, the certification may be from a law enforcement officer or victim advocate.
- Allows employers to use their existing policies, as long as they meet the minimums set forth in the law for time earned, types of use and method of use, and give employers flexibility as to how they define a "year" for the purposes of sick time accrual.

Why is this important?

- A quarter of adults in the US report having been fired or threatened with job loss for taking time off for being sick or caring for a sick loved one.
- For a low-income family without paid sick days, going just 3.5 days without wages is the equivalent to losing a month's groceries.
- Nearly 80% of restaurant workers lack access to paid sick days, meaning they're coming to work sick on a regular basis. The Center for Disease Control estimates

that sick restaurant workers contaminating food cause more than 2.5 million cases of food borne illness.
- Economists say that policies like paid sick days increase job retention and help reduce unemployment, ultimately strengthening the economy.

Our Nation is Ready for Guaranteed Paid Sick Days

From San Francisco and Seattle to Minneapolis and New York City, 40 locations have now passed paid sick days laws, newly covering more than 14 million workers. In 2016 alone, broad and diverse coalitions won fourteen new laws, including three states: Vermont, Washington, and Arizona. In all of the locations where paid sick days laws have been implemented, we have seen positive reactions from both workers and the business community, including businesses that were initially opposed to the policy. Now, nearly 90% of Americans, including 96% of Democrats and 73% of Republicans, believe passing laws like the Healthy Families Act is important for keeping working families economically secure.

Despite this progress, we still have work to do. More than a third of working people — and more than three-quarters of those who handle our food or care for our frail and elderly — still do not earn even a single paid sick day. We need a national policy that covers all Americans. It's time to pass the HFA now!

What You Can Do

- Contact your elected officials and tell them to support the Healthy Families Act (HFA).
- Use social media to highlight the need for paid sick days and the Healthy Families Act by using hashtags #HFAnow and #PaidSickDays.

For more information and links to the research, go to http://familyvaluesatwork.org/graphics/EarnedSickDaysKeyEvidence.pdf