

To: San Jose City Council

CC: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors; San Mateo County Board of Supervisors; City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors; City of Oakland Council Members; City of Santa Rosa Council Members

Re: Immediate Extension of Local Emergency Paid Sick Leave Ordinance

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Council Members,

We write to you on behalf of a broad coalition of non-profit organizations, which represent public health, labor, racial equity, and education concerns across the San Francisco Bay Area.

We commend your leadership in adopting an emergency paid sick leave ordinance to protect the health and well-being of your jurisdiction’s workers and the larger community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We urge you to extend the sunset date of your local ordinance immediately, to keep the extension in effect for the duration of this current public health crisis, and to ensure that the ordinance covers as many workers as possible.

Earlier this year, the Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was enacted, providing new emergency paid sick leave (EPSL) protections to some workers through December 31, 2020. The new law left out large sections of the population. Fortunately, local governments like yours stepped forward to close those gaps by adopting local emergency paid sick leave policies that protect over 2.9 million residents of the Bay Area. These local provisions also sunset on December 31, 2020.

When these emergency policies were drafted, it was not clear how long the pandemic would be present in our communities. California is now experiencing a new surge in COVID-19 cases, with up to 150,000 new cases projected between mid-November and mid-December alone¹. A vaccine is not expected to be available for community-wide use until deep into 2021 at the earliest.

This means that we stand to lose our emergency paid leave infrastructure in the very months in which the pandemic is most severe, with little hope for a rapid medical resolution.

Paid sick leave is a clear public health necessity to address this situation. When workers don’t have sufficient paid sick leave, fear of income loss leads many to report to work even when they’re ill. This means that sick individuals suffer needlessly. It also increases the spread of infectious diseases to co-workers and customers. Lack of paid sick leave disproportionately affects low-wage workers of color. Now more than ever, ensuring that workers are protected by robust emergency paid sick leave policies is essential to reduce the spread of COVID-19, address deep health inequities in COVID-19 health outcomes, and create the conditions that allow California to safely re-open its economy and recover from the pandemic-created recession.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cases-updates/Consolidated-Cases-Forecasts-2020-11-16.pdf>

Thank you again for your leadership to date in advancing emergency paid sick leave policies. We stand ready to support you in coordinating your efforts with other Bay Area jurisdictions that are working to extend local emergency paid sick leave ordinances, and to partner with you to build a robust paid sick leave policy and implementation structure in your jurisdiction.

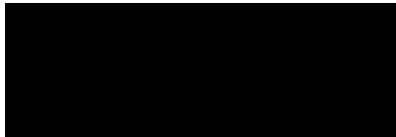
Sincerely,



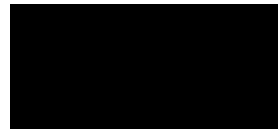
Melissa Jones
Executive Director
Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)



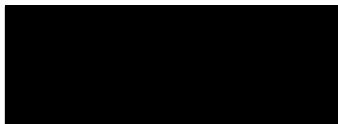
Mara Ventura
Executive director
North Bay Jobs With Justice



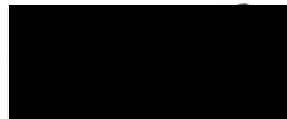
Jack Buckhorn
Executive Director
North Bay Labor Council, AFL-CIO



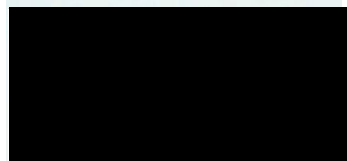
Jean Cohen
Interim Executive Officer
South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council



Louise Auerhahn
Director of Economic and Workforce Policy
Working Partnerships USA



Jenya Cassidy
Director
California Work and Family Coalition



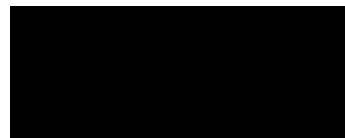
Julie Lind
Executive Secretary/Treasurer
San Mateo Labor Council



Kate O'Hara
Executive Director
East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy



Kung Feng
Lead Organizer
Jobs with Justice San Francisco



Jen Chou
Reproductive Justice & Gender Equity Attorney
ACLU of Northern California