



**GOOD JOBS AND LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS COALITION**

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Milwaukee is at a crossroads; while once a shining beacon of hope and prosperity for America's working class, we've seen our city deteriorate, pushing those who helped make it strong into poverty and despair. Far too many people in Milwaukee lack access to the job opportunities necessary to create healthy families and stable communities. Those who have been fortunate enough find fulltime employment struggle trying to balance keeping their jobs with taking care of their family responsibilities.

The Good Jobs and Livable Neighborhoods Coalition is honored to be a part of the Milwaukee movement for paid sick days. At GJLN it is our fundamental belief that all people should have access to family supporting jobs that benefit their communities. For the member's of our coalition no job can be "family supporting" without allowing employee's to earn paid sick days.

As we were helping gather signatures for the paid sick days petition we heard countless stories on how the lack of paid sick days affects the men, women, and children in our community. We also heard from many business owners, some who already offer paid sick days and others who would like to, they believe that adopting a paid sick days standard would help level the playing field for businesses who want to value their employees and still remain competitive. Over the next few weeks as elected officials you will hear these stories as well. Listen to them, and understand that for each person brave enough to testify, there are at least 42,000 Milwaukee residents who agree with them but couldn't be here today.

Milwaukee is facing a job crisis, which may lead some to believe that any job is a good job. Yet the instability in our neighborhoods proves just the opposite. In these times of limited resources, we ask that our elected officials demonstrate the courage necessary to address the real issue at hand. All workers in our city deserve the basic dignity and respect of being able to care for themselves or family when they are ill. They deserve the same respect afforded to each member of the Common Council. It is better for the individual, better for the community and better for the business when employees can earn paid sick days. Many in opposition to this ordinance would like to scare us into believing that the sky is falling. That requiring a minimum standard for paid sick days will drive businesses out of the city. While all the evidence from other cities proves this to be false, I ask that you reject the notion for another reason - I ask you to reject it because Milwaukee deserves better. Every restaurant, childcare center, auto shop, and factory will not pick up and leave Milwaukee over paid sick days. That alternative will be much more costly than compliance. Our goal should be to foster work environments that allow people to support their families and stay or move out of poverty. Paid sick days is a key component to making work, work for everyone, and we sincerely hope that our elected officials take the voices and opinions of 42,000 Milwaukee residents into the same consideration as a small minority of opponents who would seek to balance their checkbooks on the backs of Milwaukee's most vulnerable residents.

Thank you,

Jennifer Epps