

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 15, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Toni Atkins
President pro Tempore
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Speaker
California State Assembly
1020 O Street, Suite 8330
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom, President pro Tempore Atkins, and Speaker Rivas,

As California representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives, we write to you with a historic opportunity for our state to continue its national leadership in providing paid sick days for workers.

We invite you to support SB 616, introduced by Senator Lena Gonzalez, to increase the number of paid sick days that employees can earn and use under the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act from 3 to 7 paid sick days. We believe this will lead to a healthier, more productive workforce, and protect public health by significantly reducing the spread of communicable diseases in the workplace.

Unlike most other developed nations, the United States does not have national standards on paid sick leave. In 2014, California led the nation in establishing the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act, which requires employers to provide three paid sick days to all employees. Prior to 2014, nearly 6.5 million workers in California did not have access to any paid sick leave.

Following California, numerous states including Washington, Arizona, Oregon, New York, New Jersey, Colorado, Michigan, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Mexico, Vermont, and Maine, have granted workers the right to use at least five or more paid sick days per year. Seven days, as outlined in this bill, is a sensible compromise that meaningfully helps workers while minimally impacting employers.

Congress and state legislatures have an opportunity through this bill and other legislation to address the lack of adequate paid sick leave for working class Americans. The COVID-19

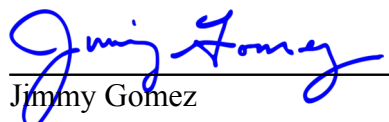
pandemic highlighted the lifesaving impacts of paid sick leave policies, while clearly exposing the gaps in our existing safety net for working families. Temporary expansions of paid sick leave policies, which have all expired, are not enough to provide a reliable safety net for workers and adequately protect public health year-round. Many California workers, especially workers earning low wages who are disproportionately women, immigrants and Black and Latinx, are only able to earn and use 3 paid sick days in an entire year.

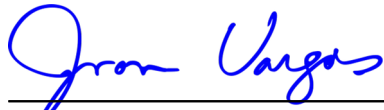
Guaranteeing at least seven days of paid sick leave will help ensure workers are less likely to report to work while sick and increase the likelihood that they will seek the medical care they need, enabling their prompt recovery and reducing unnecessary emergency room visits. When parents are unable to take time off to care for their children, they are twice as likely to send a sick child to school, putting other students and teachers' health at risk. Parents unable to take such leave are five times as likely to resort to taking a child or family member to an emergency room for medical care, further inflating health care costs for everyone. Sixty-four percent of caregivers in California are employed and paid sick leave allows caregivers to provide necessary care for their family members while remaining in the workforce. Survivors of domestic violence can also use paid sick days to seek safety-related services and support.

Ultimately, SB 616 will enhance the health and well-being of workers in California, their families, and our local communities and continue to push the country towards implementing a nation-wide paid sick leave policy.

As such, we urge you to consider supporting SB 616 and working families across California. Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this request consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

Sincerely,

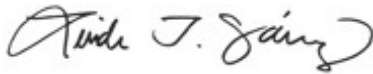

Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



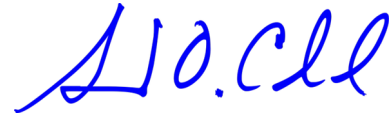
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



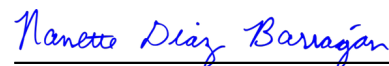
Josh Harder
Member of Congress



Kevin Mullin
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Nanette Diaz Barragán
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Tony Cárdenas
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Adam B. Schiff
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J. Luis Correa
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Ro Khanna
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