



FIRST FOCUS

CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congresswoman DeLauro and Senator Murray:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children a bipartisan children's advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal budget and policy decisions, to thank you for your leadership in reintroducing the Healthy Families Act (H.R. 1516/S. 636).

As an organization committing to securing the economic security of America's families, we applaud efforts to provide working parents with access to paid sick days.

In 2015, the overwhelming majority of households with children – 89 percent – had at least one employed parent. Yet many of these parents lack access to paid sick days through their employment. At least 41 million private sector workers, including 22 million women, are unable to earn any paid sick days.

Access to paid sick days are critical to help parents care for a child without risk of losing their job or necessary income. Parents without access to sick days are twice as likely to send a sick child to school or day care than a parent with access to paid sick days, and research has shown that children recover from being sick quicker when their own parents care for them.

Many service jobs, such as those in food service and in childcare, are centered on interpersonal contact. However, these low-wage workers often do not have the option of paid sick days so when they get sick, they cannot afford to stay home and lose wages. Their interaction with the public places children at high risk of getting sick.

The Healthy Families Act would allow workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn paid sick days. Workers would accrue one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked – up to 56 hours (7 days) per year. In addition, it provides workers with the option to use paid leave for a variety of child health-related reasons, including to care for a sick child, seek preventive care for a child, and attend school meetings related to a child's health.

We are grateful for your leadership in making children and families a legislative priority, and we look forward to working with you on this and other proposals to improve the well-being of America's children and youth.

Sincerely,