



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

**BOROUGH PRESIDENT GALE A. BREWER**  
**TESTIMONY TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL'S**  
**COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR**  
**FEBRUARY 14, 2014**

---

Good morning, and thank you, Chair Miller, for the opportunity to testify today in support of Intro 1 of 2014, the expansion of the New York City Earned Sick Time Act, a bill of which I am also a co-sponsor.

I appreciate the efforts of the Paid Sick Days Coalition members and my colleagues – including the Mayor and the Speaker - who never gave up on passing my original paid sick leave legislation last year.

I also want to thank the businesses and employers who relayed their experiences and concerns with the proposed legislation and who will be important partners in the road ahead. Earned Sick Time will only succeed with their cooperation, support, and input.

Expanding this law to include more workers will make for a healthier New York.

Under the proposed bill, it's projected that close to 500,000 workers will have the fundamental right to a paid day off when they or a family member is ill – in addition to the one million New Yorkers who are currently covered by the law when it goes into effect on April 1, 2014.

And we must not overlook that millions of other working New Yorkers who already have the right to a paid sick day, or who are not covered by this proposal, cannot be fired if they must stay home.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

While reflecting back on the 500 conference calls, hundreds of press conferences and rallies, and our meetings with thousands of parents, employees, health care workers, unions, advocacy groups, non-profits, and businesses large and small that brought us to this day– I am reminded that the challenges of education about the law and its implementation will be significant, and they will be long-term.

I have spoken with elected officials, workers, administrators, and business organizations in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Seattle about their experience rolling out paid sick leave. All highlight the need for a dedicated and collaborative effort. Laws are only effective if those they govern understand their rights and responsibilities, and I look forward to an active role in educating both workers and employers.

To make the roll-out successful, rulemaking, posting of rights in workplaces, and broad community outreach- including public seminars- are some of the steps that must be taken immediately upon passage.

Fortunately, we can benefit from the experiences and best practices of several other cities – Seattle’s website features individual posters in several languages including English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and Tagalog. Employers can easily download a model notice for employees about the paid sick time ordinance, a sample MOU for CBAs, and view a webinar. The Center for Law and Social Policy published a February 2013 report on the implementation of the Seattle Paid Sick Leave Ordinance, citing best practices and lessons learned.

On San Francisco’s site, these notices are combined and include other languages including Russian; their Office of Labor Standards Enforcement established a Paid Sick



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

Leave Hotline – where one can speak with a real live person (I know - I called last week!) who can answer inquiries in English, Spanish and Chinese.

It is heartening that Mayor de Blasio has prioritized these efforts in his newly released Preliminary Budget by including \$4.8 million in FY 2014 and \$1.8 million FY 2015 for the Department of Consumer Affairs.

We are also fortunate that many wonderful organizations, including NYS Paid Family Leave Coalition partners, are dedicated to ensuring the successful implementation of this law. Organizations such as A Better Balance, Make the Road and A Center for Popular Democracy have already been fielding many calls from employers and employees seeking information and assistance in better understanding the law.

I look forward to working with the Mayor, the Council, the Department of Consumer Affairs, workers, advocates, parents, health care workers, unions, advocacy groups, non-profits, and businesses large and small in a comprehensive and coordinated education effort.