



Maine Women's Lobby

THE VOICE OF MAINE WOMEN

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Paid Sick Days Benefits to Business Far Outweigh Costs Says National Study

Dozens Pack Hearing Room to Show Support for Paid Sick Days

Augusta – Today, the Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Labor will hold a public hearing on L.D. 1665, "An Act to Prevent the Spread of H1N1," sponsored by Senate President Elizabeth Mitchell.

While everyone gets sick, not everyone has the chance to get well. Right now, more than 200,000 Maine workers lack even a single, paid sick day from work. L.D. 1665 would allow workers in small businesses to earn approximately three paid sick days, and workers in large businesses would earn up to six paid sick days. Individuals could use their earned paid sick time for routine illness, to care for a family member in the event of a public health emergency, to recover from illness, receive preventative care, or to use in relation to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Kevin Miller, researcher from the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) will report that employers statewide will save \$37 million annually as a result of the proposed law. Miller states, "This study represents one piece of a series of such analyses conducted by the IWPR that examine public policy development in relation to paid sick days. The projected savings to Maine businesses are created through a combination of factors including reducing worker turnover, cutting down on the spread of disease at work, and helping employers avoid paying for low productivity."

Laura Harper, Director of Public Policy at the Maine Women's Lobby says, "Everyone should have access to paid sick time - it's a workplace standard that's long overdue – it protects the public health, is good common sense, and the data is clear; passing paid sick days policies saves money."

IWPR's full report, *Valuing Good Health in Maine: the Costs and Benefits of Paid Sick Days* is available at <http://www.mainewomen.org/learn.html>.

Media availabilities available upon request.

The Maine Women's Lobby is a non-partisan, non-profit, membership organization working since 1978 to increase opportunities for women and girls through advocacy and legislative action.

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