

Testimony in support of HB 3390
April 2, 2013

Mayor Dougherty and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 3390.

I have been in the workforce for almost 17 years, and have not had sick leave at a job since 2005. I currently work as a paralegal for a law firm, but I won't qualify for sick leave until the middle of August. Add into this mix that my job doesn't pay well and that getting sick isn't something you can control. As a result, I have often gone into work while sick.

Recently, I had the flu and was at work with a fever, which ended up spiking to 104° later that evening. Staying home just wasn't an option because I need every penny I earn. In the past, when I have stayed home sick by a doctor's orders, I have stressed over how I could possibly afford the loss in wages and we all know that stress doesn't help a person recover from any illness. Not only do I stress about losing a day or more in wages when I get sick, but I also worry about the cost to see my doctor, and the cost of the antibiotics or other medications (even over-the-counter ones) to help me get better.

If HB 3390 were already in place when I started working, I would have been able to take the days off I needed when I had the flu to get better without these aforementioned stressors. I would have recovered faster, and wouldn't have had to worry about making my rent payment the following month.

Employers and legislators need to understand the importance of workers having the ability to take time off when sick. After all, I highly doubt that employers want their employees coming in sick and infecting an entire office or infecting the public. Additionally, people who are sick are far less productive. Offering paid sick time would be good for workers, good for businesses, and good for our state's health.

Thank you,

Jennifer Keller