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NEW YORK CITY Business & Economy Politics **Small Business Insider**

# Small Businesses Push Quinn to Support Paid Sick Leave Proposal



By Paul DeBenedetto | October 3, 2012 1:45pm  
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NEW YORK CITY — More than 100 small businesses across the city are urging Council Speaker Christine Quinn to back newly proposed and controversial paid sick leave legislation.



Though paid sick leave legislation has a veto-proof majority su...  
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The bill, which was proposed by Councilman Dan Garodnick last month, according to reports, would give employees five paid sick days, excluding seasonal workers and employees at businesses with five or fewer workers.

Small Businesses United, a group of 105 small businesses from all over the city, alongside sick leave advocates Make the Road New York, the Working Families Party and the Restaurant Opportunities Center, drafted a letter to the speaker this week in support of the new proposal.

"Responsible small businesses look out for the health of our employees and our communities," Freddy Castiblanco, a member of Small Businesses United and owner of Terraza 7 in Elmhurst, said in a statement.

"When huge, profitable chains short-change their employees, that hurts our communities."

An earlier proposal would have required businesses with more than 20 employees to give their workers as many as nine paid sick days. Those with five to 19 workers would have to provide five sick days.

Paid sick leave legislation has a veto-proof majority support in the council, but is being held up by the speaker, who is concerned that the measure would harm small businesses.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has also slammed the idea, saying that paid sick leave would cost businesses hundreds of millions of dollars, citing a study commissioned by the business group Partnership for New York City.

In the letter, the group details a number of provisions in the proposal which they say will make it cheaper and easier for businesses to provide paid sick days, including the five-or-fewer employee exemption, reduced bookkeeping requirements and a one-year grace period for businesses to phase the benefits in.

At a recent rally in August, Anastacia Gonzalez, 31, said her husband Felix Trinidad died after delaying doctor visits, working in severe pain and failing to get proper rest after chemotherapy, because his bosses did not provide him paid sick days off.

Still, even with the level of support from some members of the small business community, Make the Road spokesman Daniel Coates acknowledged that businesses would have to calculate how the law would affect them economically.

"No business owner is going to wilfully ignore the cost," Coates said.

But Coates also said that the benefits of treating employees "the way you'd want to be treated" offers benefits in the form of happier and healthier employees.

"Business owners who are willing to stand up in support of the policy also just see the benefit," Coates said. "They just think it's the right thing to do."



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