



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
House of Representatives  
State House, Boston 02133-1054

June 30, 2021

Rep. Josh Cutler, Senate Chair  
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development  
State House, Room 472  
Boston, MA 02133

Sen. Patricia Jehlen, Senate Chair  
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development  
State House, Room 424  
Boston, MA 01233

**Re: H.2017 – An Act relative to paid family leave coverage for quarantine**

Dear Chair Cutler & Chair Jehlen,

We write to you today in support of H.2017, which speaks to the lack of family leave coverage that individuals desperately needed as we navigated, and continue to navigate, the covid-19 pandemic. Until recently, throughout the pandemic people were required to quarantine for as long as 14 days whether it was due to their potential exposure to covid-19 or even the potential exposure to someone who resides in their household. The lack of paid leave for this circumstance resulted in many people being forced to ignore public health advice and continue to go to work to provide for themselves and their families.

We are pleased to see the inclusion of at least fifty hours of Emergency Paid Sick Time in the recent UI bill and we appreciate your efforts to secure this needed benefit for workers. It is a great one-time solution to our current situation. We believe our bill would provide a permanent solution to address quarantine requirements for current and future pathogen-related public health emergencies. If there is another pandemic - and experts suggest there will be - that there is a structure at the very start to help workers and businesses.

Indeed, those who were most affected by this lack of coverage were our front-line workers. While many individuals were lucky enough to continue their jobs remotely, frontline workers were consistently putting their health at risk to ensure people in the commonwealth had access to healthcare, food, and other necessities. Many of these workers are paid by the hour and do not have two weeks of paid time off at any given time. If we as a commonwealth require people to stay home from work for the protection of our society, then we should offer an

incentive to keep them home. All workers deserve paid time off to keep themselves safe, their families safe and their community safe.

This bill would include quarantine coverage permanently in the case of any current or future public health emergencies. The bill would cover any individual who is advised by a healthcare provider to quarantine due to his or her potential exposure or if a member of their household was advised to quarantine due to potential exposure. While we hope that we will not see another pandemic in the future, we must be prepared for that possibility. This bill would ensure we have the safeguards in place to keep people home, stop the spread, and avoid the immense loss of life we saw in the last year.

We hope the committee will report this bill out favorably. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our offices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Livingstone".

Jay Livingstone  
State Representative  
8<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nika Elugardo".

Nika Elugardo  
State Representative  
15<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District