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NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri, Missouri NAACP, and National Council of Jewish Women-St.Louis Demand Missouri Legislature Pass Paid Leave, Now

COVID-19 global pandemic poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of Missourians without access to paid sick leave

ST. LOUIS, MO — Today, in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic and its threats to the health and safety of Missourians, community advocates from NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri, Missouri National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and National Council of Jewish Women-St.Louis are calling on the Missouri Legislature to support legislation to make access to paid sick and family leave a reality for all Missourians.

As the coronavirus continues to spread, community leaders are urging Missouri legislators to pass Senate Bill 565 from Sen. Jill Schupp (D-Creve Coeur), also known as the Missouri Earned Family and Medical Leave Program. This legislation would provide employees with up to 6 weeks of paid medical leave, parental leave, or to care for a sick family member at 100% of the employee's pay.

NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri launched Freedom is for Every Body Virtual Lobby Day today in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Attendees in the virtual lobby day urged their representatives across Twitter, email, and other social media platforms to pass SB 565 and secure paid leave for all.

Statement from NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri Executive Director Mallory Schwarz

The spread of COVID-19 has highlighted a frightening reality in Missouri: People who are living paycheck to paycheck and already left behind by our health care system, including Black and Latinx Missourians, will bear the brunt of this global pandemic. When taking a single day off of work means not being able to pay rent, put food on the table, or even keep your job, choosing to stay home is not a choice. Missouri lives are at stake. We urgently need legislators in Jefferson City to put public health ahead of political agenda and pass SB 565, before it’s too late. Together, with our community partners and supporters, NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri will continue to lead the fight for reproductive freedom, including everyone’s ability to care for themselves and their families during this global pandemic.”
Statement from Senator Jill Schupp (D-Creve Coeur)

“Now more than ever it is clear that Missouri families and workers need paid leave. We should not force people to choose between taking care of themselves and paying their rent or supporting their families. This latest health care crisis has shed a light on the need to support workers and their families, and we can’t afford to wait any longer. I’m hopeful this will be the moment when the Missouri legislature gets this done.”

Statement from President of the Missouri State Conference of the NAACP Nimrod Chapel

"Currently Missouri has no guaranteed paid sick leave for families who are forced out of work due to social distancing shutdowns or because they or a family member are sick. This disproportionately impacts working class families and communities of color. African American and Latinx workers are twice as likely to earn poverty wages, to lack paid sick leave, and be unable to take a sick day. That’s why the Missouri State Conference of the NAACP calls on Missouri lawmakers to immediately pass SB 565 to provide this urgently needed #MOPaidLeave for Missouri’s struggling families.”

Statement from CEO of National Council of Jewish Women-St.Louis Ellen Alper

“Staying home when you're sick, caring for a loved one or taking time to be with a child after birth, foster, or adoption can't only be a luxury for those who can afford it. All Missourians need access to paid sick and medical leave, and a healthcare system that works for everyone, regardless of their income. Thank you to Senator Jill Schupp for championing legislation to ensure all people in Missouri have access to basic health care without sacrificing a paycheck — or even their job.”

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NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri is the leading grassroots pro-choice advocacy organization in Missouri, and we work to protect the right of every person who can get pregnant to make personal decisions about the full range of reproductive health options, including preventing unintended pregnancy, bearing healthy children, and choosing legal abortion. NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri is the state affiliate of NARAL Pro-Choice America.

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.

NCJW St. Louis is inspired by Jewish values to advance social and economic justice for all women, children and families.