

# SUPPORT SB 645

In 2017, the Illinois Sick Leave Act (PA 99-0841) guaranteed workers across the state the right to use sick leave provided by their employers to take care of their families. The bill left out tens of thousands of workers at airlines. SB 645 would remove this exemption and ensure that all workers can exercise the rights promised by the Illinois Sick Leave Act.

- Today, most workers in Illinois may use paid sick time provided by their employer for either themselves or a sick child, spouse, parent, sibling, or grandparent. This is a higher standard than the federal minimum, which does not include any paid time off.
- Flight attendants, Pilots, ramp workers, airline mechanics, and other airline workers were excluded from the original bill at the request of airline management. These workers share the same concerns and realities that their counterparts at other companies face. They deserve the same protections that have been in law for others for more than three years.
- Airline workers in Illinois are often forced to choose between caring for a sick family member or earning their paycheck. Even if a worker has sick days available to use for themselves, there is no requirement that companies allow these days to be used to care for other sick family members.
- SB 645 would strike the language carving out airline workers from the Illinois Sick Act, restoring fairness to our family and medical leave laws.
- This bill will not increase costs to airlines or grant workers any additional sick leave. It would simply give workers the flexibility to use any sick leave or paid time off that they are already entitled to for caring for family members.
- There are no federal laws that prevent Illinois from giving these rights to airline workers. Many other states, including California, Georgia, New York, Maryland, Massachusetts, Washington, have already expanded similar benefits to airline workers.
- Supporting SB 645 will demonstrate a commitment to ensuring all workers are treated equally under Illinois state law and ensure that families are never forced to choose between caring for their loved ones or drawing a paycheck.
- This bill is a reintroduction of SB 2294 of the 101<sup>st</sup> General Assembly that was unable to be passed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the legislature being shut down. This pandemic and its effects on Illinois families shows the utmost importance and urgency of the passing of this bill so that ALL Illinois employees are able to care for their sick loved ones.