To: Council Member Greg Casar
Re: Proposed City of Austin Ordinance Establishing Sick Time Standards
February 14, 2018

Dear Council Member Casar,

One Voice Central Texas is a coalition of the executive leadership of over 100 nonprofit health and human service organizations committed to making sure that everyone can reach their full potential and contribute to our community. We represent the community’s integrated network of human services that connects every one of all ages and circumstance to the social resources, opportunities, and supports they need to thrive.

The members of One Voice Central Texas support the intent of the proposed City of Austin ordinance to increase access to paid sick time and believe that it will support the health and well-being of our clients and the whole community, by:

- Ensuring that community members do not have to make difficult decisions between working while sick and earning income to meet their other basic needs
- Enhancing the ability for community members to attend doctor’s appointments, improving preventative and intervention care
- Reducing the spread of illness that results when a sick person attends work, especially protecting those in our community with compromised immune systems
- Allowing paid time for individuals to address and ensure their safety

One Voice is currently collecting input from our members regarding the specifics of the ordinance and its impact on their organizations. Since the specifics of the ordinance were recently released, it is challenging to determine its full impact. However, some members have expressed concerns in the following areas:

1. It will create increased administrative and labor costs, with no provision for increased resources to support them. It is always challenging for nonprofits to increase resources specifically for administrative costs.
2. While it appears that about two-thirds of our membership currently meet the proposed standards, for about one-third, this will require them to implement new policies and procedures.
3. Several organizations currently have Paid Time Off, which allows for sick time, and this ordinance would require separate tracking of sick time.
4. There are some provisions regarding the tracking for which members would like to provide additional input.

As we support the ordinance in principle, it could increase budget costs for non-profit organizations and may require additional funding for implementation. We would appreciate additional time to properly assess all of the implications and work with you to address the concerns.

Sincerely,

Jo Kathryn Quinn
2018 Chair, One Voice Central Texas
Executive Director, Caritas of Austin
A Coalition of Nonprofit Health and Human Service Organizations working to make sure that everyone can contribute to our community and thrive.