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Westchester County Board of Legislators
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
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Dear Members of the Board of Legislators:

I am John Ravitz, Executive Vice President/COO of The Business Council of Westchester (BCW), the county's largest business membership advocacy organization. The BCW has 1,000 members including multinational corporations, hospitals and universities, bio-tech companies, professional service firms, mid-size and small businesses and 130 not-for profit organizations.

One of the BCW's core missions is to advocate for our members at all levels of government. we are proud of the respectful and close working relationship that we have with the Board of Legislators. That relationship has grown even stronger under the leadership of Chairman Ben Boykin, who made a commitment to the BCW to meet with our members on a regular basis to discuss specific legislation that the Board of Legislators would be taking up this year. That promise has been kept and we have already had four meetings in 2018 with the Chairman and members of the Board.

On April 12, the BCW hosted a round table discussion on The Earned Sick Leave Bill. Chairman Boykin, Legislators Borgia and Parker attended along with employers of various sizes including not for profit organizations. During the discussion many valid concerns and questions were raised including:

- Setting the threshold for the applicability of the law at 5 employees will have a serious negative impact on small businesses.
- How will businesses deal with seasonal employees?
- How will not for profits be affected by the law, i.e., organizations that run residential facilities and group homes?
- Will the law deter businesses from hiring new employees and increase wages and benefits for existing employees?
- Will the law be a mandate that adds additional administrative burdens on small businesses?
- Will the law interfere with union collective bargaining agreements?

- How will this law affect employers who provide “paid time off” instead of separate sick, vacation and personal days?

Since that April 12 meeting, I know that the Board of Legislators have revised the proposed legislation and the BCW appreciates the efforts that you have taken in that regard. But even with those changes we question why a Earned Sick Leave Law is needed in Westchester County? At our round table meeting, those in attendance heard from employers who have already created internal sick leave policies to help their employees deal with difficult personal situations. By putting those policies in place, the employer has created a positive culture for their workplace. They didn't need elected officials to draft and pass a law to deal with this issue. Businesses understand that to recruit and retain employees, it is essential that a well thought and compassionate plan be put in place to deal with these sensitive issues.

Westchester County prides itself in having a strong vibrant workforce. We have employers who are committed to their employees. Passing the Earned Paid Sick Leave legislation, which is a mandate and will have numerous unintended consequences to businesses daily, sends a message to employers, that in Westchester County, government will determine how they manage their workforce. Creating that type of environment will not help those of us who are serious about bringing more permanent jobs to Westchester. It is for that reason that the BCW continues to oppose the Earned Sick Leave Bill.

The BCW appreciates the work that the Board of Legislature has done to engage the business community in the process. That line of communication must continue to grow so that we can have meaningful discussions on future legislation that will have an impact on the business community. Please know that as the county's largest business membership advocacy organization will always serve as the bridge to bring the business community to meet with you, so that their voices can be heard.

Thank you.

John Ravitz
Executive Vice President/COO