



October 5, 2015

Councilmember David Grosso, At-Large  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 402  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Councilmember Grosso,

Thank you for attending the DC Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee (“Committee”) meeting on Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup> to present your bill, the Universal Paid Leave Act of 2015. Members of the Committee and I appreciated your willingness to share your legislative priorities and seek input from the business community in advance of the bill being introduced.

As you know, over thirty bills have been introduced since Council Period 19 that have attempted to statutorily mandate the employment relationship between an employer and employee and compensation levels. Most of these proposals have been introduced and passed without an analysis and review of the private sector’s benefit, compensation, labor policy, and wage system. These proposals have, oftentimes, resulted in increased costs for employers, challenges in administration, and lessened the District’s overall competitiveness in the region.

A working group of DC Chamber members reviewed the Universal Paid Leave Act of 2015, identified numerous concerns, and, as a result, the DC Chamber of Commerce cannot support the legislation. The Universal Paid Leave Act of 2015, as drafted, assumes that all employers do not provide paid leave to employees, there is a prevalent problem that needs legislative remedy, and attempts to give an employee a benefit in a vacuum without looking at the total benefit scheme. Additionally, there are only three other states that currently have paid family and medical leave programs and none offer a program as generous as your proposal. And perhaps, more importantly, none of those programs are funded solely by the employer. The Chamber believes this bill would be unprecedented and make the District of Columbia dangerously uncompetitive at a time when the District is trying to compete for every job it can get.

The District of Columbia’s employment law regime has changed significantly over the past eighteen months and any new policy initiatives should be based on objective and reliable analysis of the current state of the District of Columbia’s family, medical, paid and unpaid leave system. With adequate and impartial data regarding the current leave and benefit options available in

both the public and private sector, sufficient information will be available for a more informed policy discussion.

The Chamber appreciates your willingness to meet with its members to share your proposal. Should you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me or my staff, Erika Wadlington, Director of Government Relations at 202-624-0613 or [ewadlington@dcchamber.org](mailto:ewadlington@dcchamber.org)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Wingo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Harry Wingo, President & CEO  
DC Chamber of Commerce

CC: Members of the Council of the District of Columbia