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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims' Advocacy Organizations  
Support Proposed Ordinance for Earned Paid Sick Leave**

ALBUQUERQUE, NM— Domestic violence and sexual assault survivors' advocates spoke out today about how the proposed Earned Paid Sick Leave ordinance will help vulnerable families and their loved ones escape violent situations without losing a day's pay, so they can build safe and financially-secure lives.

“Survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking very often make the decision not to seek assistance or report their crime for fear of losing wages and their jobs ” said Kim Alaburda, Executive Director of the New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. “We urge you to consider survivors of violence, and the protection of children in all families as reason enough to vote for this new Healthy Workforce Ordinance.”

Advocates and impacted survivors urged voters to take advantage of early voting in favor of the Healthy Workforce Ordinance, “Please go vote FOR the proposed ordinance for Earned Paid Sick Leave as soon as possible. it will make our families safer and healthier,” said Juliann Salinas, associate director of Enlace Comunitario. “Without paid leave, survivors are limited or crushed in their ability to gain financial independence from their abusers. It is estimated that over 99% of survivors of domestic violence experienced financial abuse in addition to other forms of abuse. The very fear of losing a pay or employment just for seeking services or support compounds the trauma of domestic violence.”

“We already see the fear of losing a job and wages as a huge barrier to reporting crimes, being able to leave a dangerous situation and getting help,” said Liza Wolff-Francis Executive Director of Casa Fortaleza explaining why earned paid sick leave plays a vital role in the safety of survivors. Ms. Wolff-Francis added,“It is necessary for victims of violent crimes, like sexual assault and domestic violence, to be able to call in sick for work without having to explain to their employer what happened to them.”

Leticia Sierra, member of El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos and a domestic violence educator with of Enlace Comunitario emphasized why earned paid sick leave is an essential benefit for working families, “Having access to earned paid sick leave will allow working mothers to seek help for themselves and their children. It is essential for the wellbeing of our communities that we vote FOR initiatives, such as earned paid sick leave, that support working mothers and their children.”

[Check the Healthy Workforce Coalition’s live stream here.](#)

[Click here for photos of the press conference.](#)

Please, find the audio file of the press conference attached to this email.

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