Mr. Chair, and members of the Committee, thank you for having me here today.

My name is Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner and I’m the Executive Director of MomsRising, which has over a million members nationwide, including 40,000 members here in WA.

I’m here today to share the voices of our members, moms of Washington, who know that advancing paid sick days and raising the minimum wage boosts our families and our economy.

For example, a MomsRising member, Barbara, shared that she didn’t have access to paid sick days so had to significantly delay taking her daughter, who had an ear ache, to the doctor. This delay resulted in her daughter having permanent hearing loss.

And, Christy shared: “When my two sons were young, I always had 2 or 3 jobs at minimum wage and we barely were able to make it. You have no idea how much that effected my kids from not getting the proper dental care or clothing when they needed it.”

Our families are in crisis and this crisis hurts our economy.

The astonishing fact is that nationally 80% of low wage workers don’t have a single paid sick day, and, women (including moms) comprise the majority of low-wage, minimum wage workers.

Fortunately, advancing paid sick days and increasing the minimum wage are win-win policies. In fact, studies show that they improve public health, family economic security, and boost our economy.
The truth of the matter is that our national economy takes a beating when workers have to go to work sick due to a lack of paid sick days; costing us roughly $160 billion a year in lost productivity.

Studies also show that raising the minimum wage boosts our economy. In fact, nationally 140,000 new jobs would be created by raising the minimum wage, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago says a raise in the minimum wage would help our economy by increasing household spending nationwide by about $48 billion.

In closing, win-win solutions are possible: Raising the minimum wage and advancing paid sick days boost our families and our economy. The moms, dads, sons and daughters of Washington are counting on you. It’s time.

Thank you for considering and advancing these important bills. Thank you.

Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner
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