From: Brian Kettenring
To: Stoffmacher, Bruce
Subject: Protecting workers and more: CPD this month
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 11:30:03 AM

CPD Helps Build Momentum for Paid Sick Days Legislation Across the Country

Yesterday, Newark became the second city in New Jersey to pass Paid Sick Days and the eighth city nationwide.

Earlier this month, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio stood with City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito to announce legislation that will significantly expand the city's Earned Sick Time law, providing important protections to New York workers and improving the city's public health.

The law was originally passed last May with the help of a broad coalition of advocates and community organizations, including the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD), which, along with A Better Balance, has served as legal counsel to the coalition. Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Mark-Viverito announced their plan to immediately expand the protections of the law and to provide for more aggressive enforcement.

As CPD's Deputy Director Amy Carroll and Make the Road New

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Organizing Wins Billions for Homeowners

CPD Litigation Reveals Wall Street Influence

Maryland Minimum Wage

York's Co-Executive Director Javier Valdés write in the *Gotham Gazette,* "Their decision is a concrete move to confront and alleviate inequality, and bodes well for all New Yorkers, especially low-income workers and their families who live paycheck to paycheck." Read their full Op-Ed here.

And just yesterday, the City Council of Newark, NJ, voted unanimously to become the nation's seventh municipality to enact a paid sick days law, and the second in New Jersey following Jersey City.

Continue to the full article.

CPD's Deputy Director Nisha Agarwal to Launch New Immigrant Justice Initiative

Nisha Agarwal, a CPD founding staffmember, will be launching a new initiative.

We're both saddened and proud to announce that our Deputy Director and Co-Founder Nisha Agarwal is leaving the Center for Popular Democracy's (CPD) staff to launch a new initiative: the Immigrant Justice Corps (IJC).

The IJC will be the largest expansion of immigration legal assistance in New York City's history. Inspired by Chief Judge Robert Katzmann of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, the IJC will have nearly 100 of the most talented young lawyers and college graduates serving nearly 15,000 individuals every year for legal matters, including naturalization, deportation defense, applications for asylum, and human trafficking.

"It's a very simple concept, but it's one that will not only ensure fairness for immigrants but will infuse our legal system with a generation of lawyers committed to serving those in need," said Judge Katzmann in an article in the *New York Times*.

We will miss seeing Nisha daily in the CPD office, but she will not be far. We look forward to working closely with the IJC to ensure that immigration status is no longer a barrier to equity and opportunity.

IJC will begin its work in New York City and will offer a powerful model that can be scaled nationwide to fight poverty and improve access to justice for millions of new Americans and aspiring citizens.

Read more about the IJC here: www.justicecorps.org.

CPD Officially Merges

CPD IN THE NEWS

Seeking Better Legal Help for Immigrants
1.28.2014, *New York Times*

Occupy the Minimum Wage: Will Young People Restore the Strength of Unions?
1.26.2014, *The Guardian*

Mayor Signals New Future with Paid Sick Days Move
1.23.2014, *Gotham Gazette*

Economic Inequality: Safe Words, at Last
12.13.2013, *OZY*

CAMPAIGN NEWS

Leaders Begin City's Left Turn with Sick Pay Proposal
1.17.2014, *New York Times*

Why You Should Care That Newark Just Passed a Paid Sick Leave Bill
1.28.2014, *Slate*

Paid Sick Leave Now Mandatory for Most Businesses in Jersey City
1.24.2014, *The Jersey Journal*

De Blasio, Mark-Viverito Announce Paid Sick Leave Expansion Plan
1.17.2014, *NY1*

Eminent Domain: A Long Shot Against Blight
1.17.2014, *New York Times*

Wall Street Group Aggressively Lobbied a Federal Agency to Thwart Eminent Domain Plans
1.17.2014, *The Nation*

How to Build an Anti-Poverty Movement, From the Grassroots Up
1.21.2014, *The Nation*

Organizing Helps Secure Billions for Struggling Homeowners from Wall Street

Five years after the housing crisis, 19% of mortgages are still deeply underwater.

A year ago, the effort to hold Wall Street legally accountable for the mortgage crises seemed to have sputtered out for lack of support at the top of the Justice Department.

Rather than give up, however, determined organizers ramped up pressure in a campaign to reclaim at least some of the wealth that has been robbed from communities of color and others in the mortgage crisis. In May 2013, the Home Defenders League (HDL), a membership organization of struggling homeowners with more than two dozen partners, including the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD), Alliance for a Just Society, Right to the City Alliance, Action for the Common Good and Occupy Homes, staged a dramatic 500 person Justice to Justice Rally and week of action in Washington, DC.

The Campaign for a Fair Settlement, a project of CPD and state partners, continued to stoke public outrage at the *de facto* federal "Too Big to Jail" policy--ultimately leading to historic results**. At the end of 2013, the Department of Justice responded to public outrage with increased enforcement activity and announced a record $13 billion settlement with JPMorgan Chase.**

Continue to the full article.

CPD and ACLU Litigation Reveals Wall Street's Influence Over Housing Policy

As reported by *The Nation* last week, the Center for Popular Democracy's (CPD) litigation against the federal government has revealed close collaboration between Wall Street lobbyists and top federal officials.

In October, CPD helped 10 of our partners file a Freedom of Information Act Request seeking all communications between the major Wall Street banks and the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) about the plans of cities like Richmond, CA, to reduce foreclosures and homeowner debt and stimulate local economies through the use of eminent domain. For the 15.7 million homeowners "underwater," or owing more on their homes than they are worth,

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Pilot Deportation Defense Program off to a Strong Start

Last year, the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD) and its partners secured a $500,000 grant from the New York City Council to pilot the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project, the nation's first-ever public defender program for immigrants who are detained and facing deportation, and a major step forward for New York.

This pilot program, launched in November and staffed by attorneys from The Bronx Defenders and Brooklyn Legal Services, is already taking bold steps to protect immigrant residents from detentions and permanent deportations.

In just the first nine days of intake, the attorneys have undertaken representation in 62 cases. They have obtained release for nine clients, and two more New Yorkers were freed after NYIFUP lawyers won their cases. As the New York Times observed, the NYIFUP pilot is producing real benefits for both New Yorkers who would otherwise lack quality

eminent domain could help homeowners remain in their homes.

The FHFA failed to respond to our FOIA request and in December we partnered with the ACLU to sue the agency to force a response.

In response, FHFA turned over numerous friendly emails from one of Wall Street's primary lobbying arms - the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) - to top agency officials at the FHFA.

Continue to the full article.

Celebrating Our Partners

Minimum Wage Movement in Maryland

Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley supporting a raise in the minimum wage.

CPD's state partners in Maryland – CASA de Maryland and Communities United (CU) – have helped to build a powerful coalition of labor, community, and faith allies, that is driving an aggressive campaign to raise the state's minimum wage in 2014, which the Governor has thrown full support behind.

While Maryland has the highest percentage of millionaires in the nation, the current minimum wage remains at the base federal level of $7.25 per hour, or only $15,000 per year for a full-time worker. Raise Maryland's legislation would raise the minimum wage to $10.10 per hour by 2016, indexing it to inflation, and raise the wage for tipped workers from 50-70% of the prevailing wage.

On the front lines of grassroots organizing, workers and community members organized by CASA and CU have helped lead actions demanding fair pay and raising the campaign's profile. Those actions range from dropping "Raise the Wage!" banners over highway overhangs to leading press conferences, as well as direct actions at Walmart and last week's 400-person campaign launch featuring the Governor. Over the coming months, the fight continues, but Maryland could see higher wages in 90 days thanks to the critical efforts of

representation and the immigration courts themselves.

Continue to the full article.

The NEW Center for Popular Democracy

On Jan. 1, the Center for Popular Democracy and The Leadership Center for the Common Good merged to create the newly strengthened Center for Popular Democracy (CPD). The organizations' sister c4 organizations also merged to create a newly powerful Action for the Common Good.

Planning for 2014 is well underway. CPD staff met with representatives from our 30 core partner organizations in late 2013 for a 3-day retreat to discuss vision, campaign, and strategy for pushing a progressive agenda in the coming year.

Earlier this month, the combined CPD staff – made up of nearly 40 individuals in New York, Illinois, California, Minnesota, and Washington, DC – convened to discuss organizational goals and ambitions for 2014.

It is our shared vision that the new CPD will help change the field of community organizing, creating new strength, scale and reach to advance a pro-worker, pro-immigrant, racial and economic justice agenda.

CASA, CU, and Raise Maryland.

Visit our website to learn more and to support our work.

Follow us on Facebook! **Forward to a friend »** **Twitter**

The Center for Popular Democracy promotes equity, opportunity, and a dynamic democracy in partnership with innovative base-building organizations, organizing networks and alliances, and progressive unions across the country. CPD builds the strength and capacity of democratic organizations to envision and advance a pro-worker, pro-immigrant, racial justice agenda.

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