



"Use It Or Lose It"

*Just **14 Days** Remain In The Lame Duck Session For Legislators To Act On Real Sick Pay Reform, But With Such Broad Agreement What Is The Holdup?*

"These mayors, Republicans and Democrats understand that this issue is not a partisan issue. This issue is an issue of common sense ... This should be easy. And the fact that we're still waiting to get this done, to me, makes no sense. I really call on the legislature, let's get this done."

– Governor Chris Christie, Town Hall With 234 Mayors On Sick Pay Reform, [Teaneck, NJ](#), December 8, 2011

Legislators On Both Sides Of The Aisle Agree On The Need To End Sick Leave Payouts:

Senate President Stephen Sweeney (D): "said he agreed with the governor that employees should not be paid for unused sick time. **'I believe you should use it or lose it'** ... " (Chris Megerian, "Christie Touts Tighter Regulation On Public Worker Benefits," [NorthJersey.com](#), 11/17/11)

Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean (R): "The legislature should do away with payouts altogether and keep them at zero because its the right thing to do." (Stacy Proebstle, "NJ Legislative Leaders Debate Sick Leave Payouts," [NJ 101.5](#), 12/14/11)

Senator and Union City Mayor Brian P. Stack (D): "In fact I'll say it on the record today. I'll be a co-sponsor of that legislation, on the sick pay and the vacation pay. No doubt about it." (Mayor Brian Stack, [Remarks At Town Hall](#), West New York, NJ, 12/6/11)

Senator Jeff Van Drew (D): "I have no problem with zero (accumulated days) in the future. People have accumulated what they have, but moving forward it could be at zero." (Steven Lemongello, "Area mayors join others from across New Jersey in support of Gov. Christie's sick day and vacation day payout reform," [The Press Of Atlantic City](#), 12/9/11)

Assemblyman David Rible (R) "said the state should follow the State Police model. "It doesn't provide payouts but offers a generous amount of them during the life of the officer's career.'" (Stacy Proebstle, "NJ Legislative Leaders Debate Sick Leave Payouts," [NJ 101.5](#), 12/14/11)

A Bipartisan Group Of 234 Mayors Have Joined Governor Christie's Call For The Legislature To Take Action:

"Teaneck Mayor Mohammed Hameeduddin said his city had to pay about \$500,000 to five deputy fire chiefs who retired and still could owe as much as \$4.3 million in payouts to employees who have yet to retire. 'We had to go to emergency appropriates for half a million for time that they accrued and time that they earned,' he said." (Melissa Hayes & John Reitmeyer, "Gov. Christie Urges Lawmakers To Reform Sick Pay In Teaneck Visit," [NorthJersey.com](#), 12/8/11)

"[Hoboken Mayor Dawn] Zimmer agreed with Christie's call to reform and said, 'It's about the city employees who are working very hard, not those working the system.' ... She went on to mention how the costs of civil service litigation in her town are an inappropriate use of taxpayer money." (Gennarose Pope, "Sick days are for the sick," [Hudson Reporter](#), 12/11/11)

West New York Mayor Felix Roque: "'I always say a commander has to make a tough decision,' Roque proclaimed to Christie in front of the audience. 'And you're the commander and I'm sure you're making those tough decisions. And I also say in the military, when the going gets tough, the tough get going and you're doing it so I'm proud.'" (Mayor Brian Stack, [Remarks At Town Hall](#), West New York, NJ, 12/6/11)

"Brigantine Mayor Phil Guenther supports the governor's reform initiative, but not for existing employees. ... 'It's a new era,' Guenther added, 'and contracts going forward should reflect that. There's a new reality that all municipalities and government agencies are facing. We all realize there's fiscal challenges going forward.'" (Steven Lemongello, "Area mayors join others from across New Jersey in support of Gov. Christie's sick day and vacation day payout reform," [The Press Of Atlantic City](#), 12/9/11)

"Northfield Mayor Vince Mazzeo, a Democrat, another of the signees, said that he was in favor of "basically anything that helps us with the burden of these sick (days)." (Steven Lemongello, "Area mayors join others from across New Jersey in support of Gov. Christie's sick day and vacation day payout reform," [The Press Of Atlantic City](#), 12/9/11)

Newspapers Across The State Have Endorsed Governor Christie's Call For Zero Cash Payouts

***The Star-Ledger:* Governor Christie "Absolutely Right" On Sick Pay.** "Gov. Chris Christie wants to stop this now. Under his plan, a cop would get what he or she has accumulated, but earn nothing more. He's absolutely right. Why should taxpayers be forced to pay for benefits that far exceed anything they get themselves? Sick days should be just that: Days to use when you're actually sick. Democrats already have backpedaled from \$15,000 to \$7,500. They should keep going — to zero." (Editorial, "Democrats Should Back Gov. Chris Christie's Policy On Sick, Vacation Pay," [Star-Ledger Editorial Board](#), 11/27/11)

***Asbury Park Press:* Eliminate "Phantom Perk" Of Sick Leave Payouts.** "It isn't rocket science. Unused sick days by New Jersey's public employees should have no cash value when those workers retire. ... The long-term goal of any reform in this regard has to be the elimination of this 'phantom' perk, not some Byzantine work-around." (Editorial, "Unused sick days: Don't compromise," [Asbury Park Press](#), 12/5/11)

***The Times Of Trenton:* This "Sort Of Bonanza Must End."** "The state can no longer afford to pay out millions every year because some workers salt away their sick time for a healthy payout at the end of their careers. That sort of bonanza must end. The governor's plan to do so is a fair one. It would not take away anything from employees who have already accrued the time. But it would establish a new clear and consistent policy that prohibits sick time and vacation benefits from being used as a bank. We urge legislators to act immediately and make that change. (Editorial, "End Sick Time Payouts For N.J. Public Workers," [The Times of Trenton](#), 11/20/11)