



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Work Your Way* Coalition Launches to Save Workplace Flexibility for Chicago Workers**

Businesses, human service providers, employees and community groups to share their opposition and the negative effects of proposed Restrictive Scheduling ordinance with City Council Members

(CHICAGO – February 4, 2019) – A new coalition is launching today to save flexible scheduling options for Chicago workers making less than \$50,000. The *Work Your Way* coalition will work to educate City Council members, workers and community leaders about the negative impact restrictive scheduling ordinances will have on Chicago's working families, small businesses and the city's ability to compete.

Nearly two dozen organizations - representing thousands of Chicago restaurants, retailers, manufacturers, hotels, hospitals, theatres, human service and health care providers, and not-for-profits who collectively employ tens of thousands of Chicagoans across the city – have already joined *Work Your Way*.

Working families and their employers depend on flexibility in their schedules - especially when unforeseen issues arise, such as illnesses, childcare, school programs, snow storms/weather-related incidents and other unplanned issues. But City Council members have introduced a restrictive scheduling ordinance that will make Chicago the only city in the country that penalizes employers with 50 or more employees who offer flexible scheduling options to employees who make less than \$50,000 - *in every industry* in the city.

“Flexible scheduling has been an important element in attracting top-notch employees to the hospitality industry,” said **Carmen Rossi of the 8Hospitality Group, which operates more than a dozen restaurants in Chicago, including at Midway International Airport.** “Our industry has been a key driver in making Chicago a world-class culinary and tourism capital. Restricting employees’ ability to change their schedules on short notice will reduce shift offerings to our talent, and ultimately be extremely damaging in keeping Chicago a premier attraction for food, culture and entertainment.”



Work Your Way Coalition Launches to Save Workplace Flexibility (cont.)

As introduced, the restrictive scheduling ordinance:

- Locks employees into rigid schedules that can't accommodate last-minute school or family obligations, illnesses, or even extreme weather, without at least two-weeks'-notice
- Discourages – even penalizing – employers who work with their employees who voluntarily want to trade shifts or pick up additional hours with less than two-weeks advance notice
- Severely limits employees' ability to swap or trade shifts with their coworkers
- Prevent employees from picking up extra shifts to maximize their take-home pay
- Prohibits employees from stacking consecutive shifts to maximize their time off or accommodate those who can only work a few days each week

Every day, there are real life examples underscoring the unworkability of the ordinance. Attached to this release are some recent examples.

“The night before last week’s freeze, we had twice as many shoppers as usual and called in additional workers – many who had been asking for more hours – to ensure the safety of our customers and employees,” **said Martin Sandoval, general manager of Food Market La Chiquita with two stores in Little Village.** “It is impossible to predict weather or who is going to call in sick two or more weeks out. If restrictive scheduling becomes law and we have a weather situation like last week or someone calls in sick, our store will just be understaffed because it’ll be too expensive for us to pay the penalty and replace that person. It’ll be more pressure on our team members who show up to work and that isn’t fair to anyone.”

The proposed restrictive scheduling ordinance also establishes a new set of roadblocks that discourages small businesses from hiring more workers and growing their business. **Norman Bolden, owner of Norman’s Bistro, in the Kenwood-Hyde Park neighborhood** employs 28 employees. As written, the restrictive scheduling ordinance would not apply to Bolden because he currently employees fewer than 50 people. Nevertheless, he is concerned.

“The City Council should not penalize businesses for growing and hiring employees,” **said Bolden.** “If this ordinance goes into effect, I will think twice about opening up another restaurant or hiring more people in Chicago.”

Similar restrictive scheduling laws have been in place or passed in New York City, Seattle and Philadelphia and have had significant and negative impacts. For example:

- **Unrealistic demands on employees:** Similar two-week scheduling requirements have resulted in employees being forced to request time off 3-4 weeks in advance to ensure they and their employers have time to adjust schedules before penalties kick-in. This has been an unrealistic and challenging expectation, especially for part-time employees, single parents and others who do not always know their personal schedules that far in advance.



- **Risk to losing hours:** Employees with scheduling conflicts have had to find coworkers on their own to swap shifts or risk losing the valuable hours they depend on because employers risk being fined if they step in and help.

Work Your Way Coalition Launches to Save Workplace Flexibility (cont.)

- **Fewer opportunities to pick up additional hours:** Employees have fewer opportunities to pick up additional hours and shifts because some employers have been hesitant to pay a penalty to fill open shifts when workers call-in with less than two weeks advance notice.

“Restrictive scheduling has left employees with fewer flexible scheduling options and employers are penalized when issues arise and an employee needs to change her schedule at the last minute. Other cities should learn from the harmful impacts restrictive scheduling has had in Seattle and not impose similar restrictions on their workers and businesses,” **said Anthony Anton, CEO of the Washington Hospitality Association.**

Every industry in Chicago is different and there is no one size fits all scheduling approach. Employers and employees need the flexibility to work together to design schedules that reflect both of their needs.

“Chicago has enjoyed record tourism numbers in recent years, which means hotels have been able to employ more Chicagoans and generate millions in new tax revenue for our city. But this restrictive scheduling proposal will cost our employees shifts, hurt their flexibility in the workplace, negatively impact the services hotels offer and put at risk future growth of the city’s tourism industry,” **added Mark Lauer, general manager of the Sheraton Grand Chicago and chairman of the Illinois Hotel and Lodging Association.**

Work Your Way is a joint initiative of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Hotel and Lodging Association, Illinois Health and Hospital Association, Illinois Retail and Merchants Association and Illinois Restaurant Association. Coalition members include:

- Associated Beer Distributors of Illinois
- Broadway in Chicago
- Casa Central
- Chicagoland Apartment Association
- Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
- Illinois Bankers Association
- Illinois Beverage Association
- Illinois CPA Society
- Illinois Food Retailers Association
- Illinois Health and Hospital Association
- Illinois Hotel and Lodging Association
- Illinois Licensed Beverage Association
- Illinois Petroleum Makers Association / Illinois Association of Convenience Stores
- Illinois Restaurant Association
- Illinois Retail Merchants Association
- Illinois Trucking Association
- Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce
- Magnificent Mile Association
- McDonald’s Operators of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana (MOCNI)
- National Association of Theatre Owners
- 8Hospitality Group

To learn more, visit www.WorkYourWayIL.com.