

COUNCIL SPEAKER SHOWS LEADERSHIP ON OPPOSING PAID SICK LEAVE BILL



**Building Trades
Employers'
Association**

www.bteany.com



**A Message from Louis J. Coletti,
President & CEO, Building Trades
Employers' Association (BTEA)**

City Council Speaker Christine Quinn showed the kind of political leadership and courage that is too often lacking these days in announcing her opposition to the proposed Paid Sick Leave bill that would have required businesses with 20 employees or more to provide 9 paid sick days a year and smaller ones to provide 5 days a year.

This bill would have been a devastating blow to the City's business community which is still reeling from the effects of a terrible economy.

For the construction industry, we are close to a depression with unemployment in the unionized building trades an unprecedented 30-40%. BTEA union contractors have serious financial problems with banks being unwilling to extend credit lines, little backlog of work and every day cost increases in utilities and other daily expenses.

For the unionized construction industry, the bill would have been outright interference by government in the collective bargaining process. Paid sick leave is an issue to be negotiated between union signatory contractors and their respective trade unions-not imposed by government fiat.

Ms. Quinn deserves a great deal of credit in understanding this issue and taking such a principled stance that will only help the business community recapture its balance. That's what leadership is all about and that is why she serves as Speaker.

That is not to say her City Council colleagues are wrong in trying to find ways to strengthen New York City's middle class and their quality of life. It's just that trying to legislate issues like paid sick leave and living wages is not the way to do it. Public policies like these will only serve to discourage economic growth-not encourage the growth of businesses and creation of new jobs.

I would urge the City Council to focus its efforts on identifying ways it can spur economic development and create new jobs; what is the new sector of the economy that will lead us out of this economic morass? Have we targeted the city's job training funds to train New Yorkers for those jobs? Are there tax policies that need to be revised to encourage economic development and growth?

It has often been said, the best social program ever developed is a real job. Thanks to Speaker Christine Quinn, we can continue forward in the effort to do so.