



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Diane J. Savino

Senator Savino Urges Passage of Domestic Workers Bill of Rights

DIANE J. SAVINO January 12, 2010

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Albany – Today, Senator Diane J. Savino joined domestic workers and their supporters in calling for the immediate passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights [S2311A]. The bill, introduced by Senator Savino, guarantees protection from discrimination, notice of termination, paid sick days and holidays, and other basic labor protections long denied to nannies, housekeepers, and elderly caregivers employed in private homes.

"The first order of business should be for us to ensure that all workers are treated equally under the law. Unfortunately, domestic workers are not protected under the National Labor

Relations Act and do not have the right to organize or band together for mutual aid and protection,” said Senator Diane J. Savino (D-Brooklyn/Staten Island). “As a result of that, we have seen through the years, how domestic workers have been abused and exploited, when all they want to do is simply go to work, take care of the children and elderly that they develop a great love for, provide services to families and to do this while being treated with dignity and fairness. This legislation will provide a basic set of rights to workers that have been denied for too long,” added the Senator.

Often working alone, in the isolation of their employers’ homes, domestic workers are extremely vulnerable to physical and emotional abuse. Patricia Francois, a nanny who left an abusive situation in Manhattan, came to Albany to explain why she and other workers need legal protection. Francois was hit by her employer and taken to the emergency room by a neighbor after working approximately six-and-a-half years taking care of her employer’s child. “How could you treat me this way? I am taking care of the most precious thing in your lives – and you treat me like I’m taking care of a piece of garbage,” said Francois. After physically abusing her, Francois’s employers repeatedly asked her to come back and continue working.

In June 2009, the New York State Assembly passed similar legislation to include domestic workers in existing labor laws, but domestic workers are urging New York State senators to go further. “This industry is like no other. We need Albany to take action and level the playing field for domestic workers who have no way of negotiating with their employers for better conditions,” said Joycelyn Gill-Campbell, a former nanny and currently an organizer with Domestic Workers United.

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To see video of the conference please click on the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCDHP1ABFAw>