

May 29, 2024

Dear Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie:

We're writing to you today about an urgent matter. Low-wage immigrant women of color working in nail salons face enormous challenges on the job, from wage theft to reproductive health risks. They are tired of being ignored.

For the last 3 years, nail salon workers have campaigned and advocated for the [Nail Salon Minimum Standards Council Act](#). Women in the nail salon industry have marched, organized, and campaigned for passage of this legislation, so that they can have a voice in an industry that has often exposed them to exploitation and dangerous working conditions. Yet this sensible legislation has languished in the state legislature without even a committee hearing or a vote, not because of lack of support from members of the legislature and the respective labor chairs, but because the bill has been blocked from being considered altogether. That's wrong and unacceptable.

Nail salon workers are organizing for change because they are losing thousands of dollars every year due to wage theft. Because they are getting sick from toxic chemicals. Because many are nearing retirement, but can't afford to stop working. Because their babies are being born with abnormalities. A horrifying new [report](#) reveals that New York's nail technicians, who are predominantly Asian and Latin American immigrant women, face greater reproductive harms, including complications during pregnancy and birth defects in children, compared to the general population.

The time for you to act as legislative leaders to empower and protect tens of thousands of nail salon workers is now.

The [Nail Salon Minimum Standards Council Act](#) is simple: it will create an industry council to bring together workers, owners, and the government to recommend new sector-wide labor standards for nail salons, so that New York can better protect the workplace rights and reproductive health of all nail salon workers. Other jurisdictions have recognized the value of and adopted this model for a variety of industries, from California to Colorado, Nevada, and Minnesota.

The nail salon industry is growing rapidly – not just in New York City but in Westchester, the Hudson Valley, and throughout our state. But as a whole, it is not resulting in the good jobs we need to foster healthy and thriving communities. Today, nail salon workers are declaring that

they too deserve good jobs and safe workplaces like any other New Yorker. And we need you to take action immediately to make that a reality.

Our statewide coalition urges you to take action immediately in the current legislative session to pass the [Nail Salon Minimum Standards Council Act](#).

Respectfully,

NYS Senator Robert Jackson
NYS Senator Jeremy Cooney
NYS Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas
NYS Assemblymember Emily Gallagher
NYS Assemblymember Karines Reyes
NYS Assemblymember Phil Steck
NYS Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky
Adhikaar
New York Committee for Occupational Safety & Health
Mekong NYC
Planned Parenthood of Greater New York
National Employment Law Project
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Tompkins County Workers' Center
Southeast Asian Defense Project
UAW Region 9A
Workers United NY NJ Regional Joint Board a/w SEIU
National Domestic Workers Alliance
Her Justice
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Legal Momentum
ALIGN
Street Vendor Project at the Urban Justice Center
Jahajee Sisters
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
Long Island Progressive Coalition
Coalition of Labor Union Women, AFL-CIO