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Legislating the Private Sphere: Analyzing the Passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers'

Bill of Rights

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Abstract

Domestic workers – a category that includes those performing house cleaning, nanny, home health care, and other household services – constitute a sect of the low-wage labor force whose work has historically been (and continues to be) socially and economically undervalued. Existing research shows that domestic workers face a dearth of labor rights, rendering them vulnerable to exploitation and a wide range of workplace abuses. However, legislative efforts can help to mitigate this vulnerability. In this paper, I undertake an analysis of the Illinois Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights which passed in 2016 and guaranteed domestic workers coverage under four existing state laws from which they had previously been excluded. This qualitative study uses fourteen interviews with community organizers and activists, policy advocates, and lawmakers, as well as document review, to show that the passage of this bill was fraught with challenges stemming from historic racism and sexism. Specifically, these findings show that domestic workers face particular forms of workplace abuses related to the physical location of their work in the “private” sphere of the home. Further, this study reveals that consequent necessary special protections in light of domestic workers’ unique vulnerabilities were not afforded to these workers as the bill was negotiated down through the legislative process. These exclusions were largely the result of structural and institutionalized racism and sexism that led legislators’ having a lack of knowledge and/or being unwilling to bolster safeguards for domestic workers. The findings presented here can help give insight into the unique challenges facing efforts to legislate protections for domestic workers.

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This paper is dedicated to those who care for our loved ones, clean our homes, and perform the domestic labor that keeps our families and economies working globally. May your work be respected, valued, and celebrated as it should be.

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Legislating the Private Sphere: Analyzing the Passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights

Introduction

Domestic work is commonly defined as the work that makes all other work possible (Mercado and Poo 2008). This paid work is done by housecleaners, nannies, personal chefs, and home care workers who perform the socially reproductive work that allows for the daily sustenance of families and households (Dow and Mason 2018). Yet domestic workers globally face exploitation due to a combination of factors, ranging from their historical exclusion from labor protections to their lack of visibility given that their work takes place in the private sphere of the home (Nilliasca 2011; England 2018). Research draws on the fact that people performing domestic work are typically situated at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities across gender, class, and citizenship status (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Romero 2002). That is, socially reproductive labor is often performed by women of color who are socioeconomically disadvantaged and face precarious legal documentation status.

In addition, working in private households adds to the rather unique mistreatment of domestic workers on multiple fronts: isolating them to the point that traditional forms of unionization become nearly impossible (Fine 2007); pressing them to work longer hours and perform more tasks throughout the day even when their pay remains stagnant (Burnham and Theodore 2012); and exploiting the highly gendered assumption that any compensation for care work is enough because it is essentially a 'labor of love' (Kafer 2013). In addition, the split between the private and public spheres of work are highlighted in feminist theoretical texts that outline the dangerous repercussions of barring domestic work from formal government regulation because of its confinement in the shadow of the household (Das Gupta 2008). Finally,

extant racism and the legacy of slavery in the United States have resulted in domestic workers' exclusion from both labor protections and formal unions and have forced domestic workers to find ways to protect themselves through internal organizing to address their distinctive needs (Terborg-Penn 1985; Fine 2007).

A large body of research has studied the history and consequences of the exploitation of domestic workers by societies in need of care work. While there are some accounts of the movements behind domestic workers' labor rights in states such as New York and California (Goldberg 2014; Appelbaum 2010), literature addressing the passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights remains sparse, only existing in the form of news articles celebrating its passage. In a state with a rich history of labor movements, and with a former Republican governor notoriously hard on organized labor (Gullett 1994; Greenhouse 2015), the significance of this landmark legislation guaranteeing rights to minimum wage and protection against sexual abuse for domestic workers cannot be overstated. Adding to the body of existing literature with a study of the passage of another domestic workers' bill in a state with a particular political and organizing context is an important contribution to the existing set of case studies. This research may allow activists to identify patterns and pursue similar strategies for successful passage of domestic workers' legislation on the county, state, and federal levels. Moreover, this research speaks to broader patterns of racism, sexism, and classism in both the legislative and occupational spheres.

In this study, I draw on fourteen interviews with labor organizers, academics, lawmakers, a policy advocate, and a domestic worker-activist to explain the story of this bill's passage. I discuss the role of women's activism in labor movements historically, along with the contemporary environment in which this bill was passed, to contextualize the gendered political

and social barriers to passing such legislation in the Illinois General Assembly. I explore the challenges of legislating in the (semi-)private sphere, which becomes less private when one brings employees into that realm, and consider the debates surrounding the extension of labor rights to a population of workers not always considered to be a part of the formal labor force. Through this process, I contribute to a deeper understanding of the practical challenges that domestic worker-activists and advocates faced leading up to the passage of this legislation. Ultimately, I describe how historical barriers to domestic work being considered legitimate labor worthy of legal protections remain entrenched. Because the demand for domestic workers' services will likely increase as income inequality continues to grow (Milkman 2016), an analysis of how protections for this population have been established and augmented can help inform efforts to expand labor rights in domestic work and other rapidly-expanding, semi-private industries across the changing economy of the United States.

Domestic Work in Context

Conceptualizing Work

Prior to the process of industrialization that prompted the rapid commodification of labor, socially reproductive work, including care work, was deemed at least as valuable as commodity-producing activity (Dean 2016). Over this period of capitalist industrialization, what was deemed 'women's work' also became synonymous with unpaid labor. The sexual division of labor is what separates men's paid, productive work in the labor market from women's unpaid, 'unproductive' labor performed in the household. Women's work refers to work that is vital to human survival; "childbirth, childrearing, food provision, clothing provision and caring," as opposed to men's work which contributes "to the production of the unnecessary luxury items of

life” (Dex 1985, p. 102). Even with this acknowledgement that care work is vital to the very existence and maintenance of society, modern economic systems calculate wealth based on paid, commodity-producing work (Dex 1985). Women’s work is thus subordinated as unproductive labor.

Domestic work very rarely involves direct production; rather, it “restore[s] or reproduce[s] both the labor force and the family forms in which it takes refuge,” rendering it unproductive labor in its inability to provide direct capital accumulation (Collins 1990, p. 17). The debate over whether to categorize domestic labor as productive or unproductive labor has real consequences for the struggles this population faces in fighting for labor right as employees. Collins (1990) argues that, while domestic labor allows productive workers to reproduce themselves, it does not inherently produce a commodity. However, Gimenez (1990) challenges this notion by outlining domestic labor’s contribution to the economy in a myriad of ways: from household economic consumption to household maintenance and a production of goods and services for the market, through things such as childcare. In addition, many neoclassical economic studies are beginning to consider households to be units of production insofar as they process “consumption goods” through productive work, thus making household labor intricately tied to production (Dex 1985, p. 109). This shift in considering household labor to be a productive activity lends credence to the notion that domestic workers do indeed perform formal labor, which bolsters their claims for employee status.

Domestic labor’s ability to be considered legitimate, productive work is also undermined by the characterization of this work as ‘shadow work.’ Shadow work is a term used to describe the unpaid labor that industrial societies depend on to continually produce goods and services (Illich 1981 as cited by Macdonald 2010, p. 110). Shadow work occurs outside of the formal

labor market, making it susceptible to difficulty in regulation and the idea that it is labor performed out of love instead of for wages. Because domestic work is performed for the care of others or a private household, it is often believed that this shadow work does not need to be compensated adequately as it is done out of love (Silbaugh 1997; Macdonald 2010; Kafer 2013). Domestic labor's link with shadow work renders it susceptible to more exploitation, because the intimate employer-employee relationship allows employers to extract not only labor but also love from domestic workers (Rollins 1985; Andrews and Ray 2018). The idea of shadow work being unwaged helps to explain why domestic workers must battle to reframe their worker status as 'employee' rather than 'loving member of the family.'

However, it is also necessary to problematize the view that domestic work must conform to definitions of labor as commodity-producing or 'real' in a traditional sense in order to be considered worthy of worker protections. Defining work strictly as direct commodity-producing labor upholds prejudicial views of household work as something that is dismissed as a non-market activity, which need to be overcome by expanding the definition of work. By describing work as an activity that "involves effort, produces value, and is structured by the same factors that shape paid work, such as labor market opportunities, individual motivation, social norms, and gender," Budd offers a more inclusive definition of work (2016, p. 39). An expanded definition of work includes the gig economy, which is a term used to describe a form of labor characterized by an on-demand labor force not afforded basic labor protections, rights to form unions, and workplace regulations (Ravenelle 2019). Like those working as ride-share drivers and on Task Rabbit in the gig economy, domestic workers are not classified as employees but rather as independent contractors. As Ravenelle points out in *Hustle and Gig*, the problem with the classification of workers as independent contractors is that laborers in a rapidly growing

segment of the economy are stripped of their labor rights and forced into precarious working situations (2019). Because their work is even more flexible and unregulated (negotiated through personal agreements rather than apps or online platforms), domestic workers face even more vulnerability than most workers in the gig economy. Establishing the place of domestic workers in the larger labor movement means greater inclusivity in the labor market. As long as traditional ideas of what constitutes ‘work’ and ‘employer’ continue to influence labor laws, there will be no way to uplift workers from the precarity they face.

Women, Domestic Workers, and Labor Movements

In the early twentieth century, social pressures to maintain traditional family roles often limited women’s participation in the formal labor market and restricted their ability to join and organize unions. This control over women’s positions in the formal labor market is most visible in rules restricting them from working past certain times and in “‘informal’ environments such as bars” (Kessler-Harris 1981, p. 92). Within the labor movement of the time, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) tenuously embraced the Women’s Trade Union League (WTUL) in an effort to assuage any potential negative impacts of working women on the family unit. These negative impacts were thought to occur either through women’s cheap labor driving down men’s wages or women’s long hours keeping them from their child-rearing responsibilities (Kessler-Harris 2007; Crain 2007). Women’s family responsibilities had a two-fold negative impact on their union engagement. First, time barriers, created by the double burden women faced as workers and caretakers, rendered women unable to devote much time to organizing efforts (Kessler-Harris 2007). Second, many women felt loose attachments to unions due to their

orientation to the labor movement as a temporary post, while marriage and family life were more long-term goals (Kessler-Harris 2007).

Resulting from their tenuous relationship with formal unions, many mid-20th century women labor activists realized that legislative advocacy provided a sufficient avenue for earning higher wages and working fewer hours without the organizational challenges of unionization (Kessler-Harris 2007, p. 90). However, the protective legislation that was passed as a result of these efforts was limiting in its restrictions on working hours and wages, which effectively kept women from competing with their male wage-earning counterparts (Kessler-Harris 1981). The debate over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a good example of this dichotomy, because it highlights two differing perspectives on this protective legislation. Opponents of the ERA at the time feared that challenging these laws would eliminate ‘special labor protections’ for women, while proponents of the ERA argued that these protections were restrictive and sexist (Kessler-Harris 1981).

Although the WTUL’s affiliation with the AFL provided some connection to the broader labor movement for women, their relationship was fragile. The weak nature of this association combined with the AFL’s disinterest in organizing “unskilled and minority women,” a lasting racist disposition well-known in the 1920s, caused the WTUL to hesitate in embracing domestic workers (Van Raaphorst 1988, p. 197; Terborg-Penn 1985). At the turn of the twentieth century, most women in domestic service were characterized by their lack of the “adequate knowledge of English, social status, education,” and proper etiquette to work in offices and small shops – a population which primarily included Southern and Eastern European and Chinese migrants, as well as African American women from the South (Van Raaphorst 1988, p. 37; Rollins 1985, p. 51). While different phases of migration impacted the racial and ethnic makeup of domestic

workers, Van Raaphost (1988) points to the Great Migration as a mark of the spread of Black women's subjugation into domestic servitude across the country. As white women went to work in factories and other industrial occupations, Black women migrants from the South were forced into domestic labor due to occupational discrimination based on race (Rollins 1985). The "triple exploitation" of these laborers arising from their subordinated race, gender, and class statuses (Nadasen 2015, p. 16) necessitates a consideration of these three factors in discussions of women's solidarity, or lack thereof, in terms of the goals of the wider labor movement.

Further, the refusal of the AFL to acknowledge domestic work as skilled labor had a hand in the exclusion of this population from unionization (Boris and Nadasen 2008). This short history of domestic work in the U.S. also emphasizes how this labor is dependent on larger migration patterns. In other words, Rollins (1985) notes how critical understanding the nuances of domestic work is to framing the ways in which this industry is "chameleon-like" in its ability to adapt its "size, role, and composition in relation to changes in the larger political and economic spheres of the society" (p. 58). Just as domestic labor adapts to changes over time, so too does the ability of these workers to organize for change in their industry in creative and effective ways.

Much popular discourse on domestic workers' lack of labor rights revolves around the notion that domestic workers were historically un-organizable (Smith 2000; England 2017). However, a more critical analysis reveals that domestic workers have actually been organizing themselves in innovative ways for decades. From the 1934 establishment of the Domestic Workers' Union in Harlem to the establishment in 1968 of Dorothy Bolden's National Domestic Workers Union, domestic workers have historically organized to fight for decent wages, partially achieved by putting pressure on fellow workers to refuse to work for less money. In doing so,

organizers highlighted a “community of shared experience and suffering” among domestic laborers (Nadasen 2015, p. 16; Boris and Nadasen 2008). In addition, the Association of Women Wage-earners (established in the 1910s) and the CIO-affiliated United Domestic Workers’ Union (founded in the mid-20th century) exemplify how organizations served as assessors of domestic laborers’ working conditions and wages and acted as bargaining agencies (Terborg-Penn 1985). In Chicago specifically, there was a strong affiliation of domestic workers with the Workingwomen of America (established in 1901), which set up explicit rules that outlined how domestic servants should be treated inside the household (Van Raaphorst 1988). These rules included what would likely constitute modern day contracts, such as specific hours for when the workday should begin and end and allocations for breaks throughout the day (Van Raaphorst 1988).

Advocacy on behalf of, or on the part of, domestic workers is largely overlooked partially due to the fact that much of this activism originated from Black women who were often affiliated with Marxist feminism (Nadasen 2015). Further marginalizing domestic workers’ inclusion in the wider labor movement were their ties with these intellectual-economic ideas, especially during the era of McCarthyism. For example, in the 1950s, the Sojourners for Truth and Justice collaborated with the National Negro Labor Council and based their intellectual inquiry of domestic labor in “class-based Marxist analysis” (Nadasen 2015, p. 16). Another issue plaguing domestic worker organizing was the fact that domestic workers themselves were often not centered in associations purporting to advocate for them; rather, these groups often amplified the voices of women already in power, like employers and leaders of women’s labor movements (Van Raaphorst 1988).

Further, while labor organizations like the WTUL did incorporate some recommendations for the improvement of domestic labor, like adopting certain standards for working hours and conditions for live-out service, they did not fight particularly aggressively in pursuit of these goals (Van Raaphorst 1988). On the contrary, WTUL and other similar organizations were often passive in their advocacy, because they operated under a logic that fighting for labor rights for all workers would eventually encompass and benefit domestic workers (Van Raaphorst 1988). However, this trend was broken most apparently in the 1970s when the Household Technicians of America (HTA) led the fight to remove the exclusion of domestic workers from the Federal Labor Standards Act, which would allow them to receive minimum wage (Swinth 2018). In addition to fair pay, HTA called for worker protections and the recognition of domestic worker professionalism by emphasizing domestic workers as ‘real workers’ and the home as a legitimate place of work (Swinth 2018). As is demonstrated by HTA’s work, the formal fight for domestic workers’ labor rights has been ongoing for decades, and victories like HTA winning federal minimum wage protections in the 1970s and the Illinois coalition winning state minimum wage inclusion in 2016 are hard-fought. The same techniques used in the 1970s were used in the Illinois Domestic Worker Coalition in 2016, demonstrating how, after decades of advocacy, domestic workers still have to fight to be considered workers.

Domestic Workers Create Space in the Labor Movement

The exclusion of domestic workers from formal unions results in their ongoing sidelining from the larger labor movement, insofar as they are not considered formal organized labor but are rather thought of as “alt-labor” (Milkman 2019b). Further, domestic workers, along with agricultural workers, were very purposefully excluded from much New Deal legislation as

concessions to Southern lawmakers who depended on low-wage labor for their own economic prosperity (Perea 2011). Because of the historical antecedents of their marginalization, domestic workers were not afforded the same legislative protections as other workers at the federal level, which eventually trickled down naturally to exclusion from state laws. Most of these exclusions are rhetorically justified today based on a restrictive definition of ‘employer’ (which excludes those employing fewer than fifteen employees) and were enabled by a lack of collective unity among domestic laborers (Hiller and Saxtein 2009).

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 initially excluded domestic laborers from protection under federal minimum wage laws but was amended to include them in 1974 – largely due to the congressional advocacy efforts of Shirley Chisholm (Nadasen 2015). On the federal level, the National Labor Relations Act, The Family and Medical Leave Act, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, among others, still exclude domestic workers today, although individual states, like New York and California, are amending their laws to provide labor protection to domestic workers. Illinois is another such state and evaluating its steps towards passing this legislation is a task I take up in this paper.

Situating Domestic Work in the 21st Century

Around the time Barbara Ehrenreich’s *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (2001) was making waves for its exposition of the harsh realities of low-wage labor in America, the intersection of domestic work, race, and immigration arose as a central theme in conversations about increasing inequality and social stratification. Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo’s *Doméstica* (2001) arrived on the scene months later to contextualize and frame the debate over domestic labor by amplifying voices of domestic workers and their employers. Through

interviews, surveys, and ethnographic observation of domestic workers, Hondagneu-Sotelo (2001) reveals the complex relationship between paid domestic labor, organizing, formal unionization, and government regulation. Similarly, in *Maid in the U.S.A.*, Romero (2002) presents an account of this labor force as undervalued and underpaid yet simultaneously strong in their individual fights for minimum wages and acceptable working environments. Ultimately, these mixed-methods approaches to highlighting the working life of paid domestic laborers offer a critical human voice to the research about domestic workers, their hours and wages, and their occupational abuse and stigmatization (Domestic Workers United and Data Center 2006; Burnham and Theodore 2012).

A consideration of organizing in the sphere of domestic work allows us to better understand why the combination of domestic workers' voices and empirical evidence is so critical to setting up a basis for formal legislative rights. The neoliberalization of the current American welfare state delegated responsibility for things like care work from federal to local governments and then from governments to markets and families themselves (Boris and Klein 2010). The International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention 189 set global standards for domestic workers and was a landmark victory in proving that domestic laborers are indeed organizable and are prepared to fight for their basic human and labor rights (Fish 2017). However, domestic workers and their allies had been organizing for decades prior to, and since, the ILO's formal recognition and continue to do so today.

Chun and Agarwala's 2016 article "Global Labour Politics in Informal and Precarious Jobs" offers a framework to understand how domestic work became a "leading sector of innovation in both national and global-level organizing efforts" (p. 365). Chun and Agarwala (2016) argue that these workers are actively reinvigorating the labor movement by creating alternative cultures of

organizing that form a more comprehensive movement rooted in intersectionality with a strong focus on the immigrants' rights movement. The major formats of this organizing include worker centers and community-based organizations, which are characterized by their focus on advocating on behalf of low-wage workers with restricted access to conventional unions due to race, gender, and/or citizenship status (Milkman 2016; Fine 2007). Worker centers respond to the unique protections and advocacy required by domestic workers, which distinguishes them from traditional labor unions (Fine 2007). Organizing on issues beyond employment, such as advocacy for immigrants' rights, access to healthcare and driver's licenses, and the provision of English classes, mark worker centers' distinctive response to low-wage, vulnerable workers (Ally 2005; Fine 2007; Milkman 2019a). Worker centers and associations build a foundation for legislative advocacy on state levels, because they increase the "capacity, visibility and influence" of domestic labor in social justice movements more broadly (Mercado and Poo 2008, p. 4).

In analyzing legislative advocacy for domestic workers' labor rights, methods used in existing literature include qualitative analysis and narrative study that lay out models of successful campaigns. Specifically, in her analysis of the New York domestic workers' bill, Hobden (2010) shows that critical tactics included centering domestic workers' voices, coalition building, and strategic media framing. In this same vein, current Executive Director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance Ai-Jen Poo penned an article outlining the organizing model for the New York bill, which highlighted the need for connecting domestic workers' issues to larger structural inequalities and contextualizing this labor within historical and feminist theoretical frameworks (2011). Moreover, Goldberg's (2014) analysis of several domestic worker bills situates domestic workers within the context of the broader labor movement by arguing that many sought-after labor protections are not actually viable until larger progressive

public policy goals are achieved, like the fight for higher minimum wages. However, Nilliasca (2011) – in her article outlining the legislative process involved in passing the New York Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights – critiques the use of legal avenues to try to effect transformative change and questions how the passage of these bills actually impacts the lives of domestic workers. Hayashi also cautions against building a movement that solely relies on legislative action in her assertion that pursuing social change through law is dangerous insofar as legal rights can get co-opted by law and “translate[d] ... into one-dimensional rights ... which lack traction in the economic and social realms” (2010, p. 501). Especially in a legal environment with immigration policies allowing “employers to thrive off of an underground economy of hyper-vulnerable workers,” domestic workers must focus on not only equality but also equity with other workers given their particular set of vulnerabilities (Hayashi 2010, p. 502). Finally, Chun and Agarwala highlight the importance of examining the effectiveness of state-level legislative advocacy for informal and precarious laborers in ensuring the “sustainability” of alt-labor into the future (2016, p. 644). The issue of whether legislative strategies are sufficient to enact real change continues to be debated in the literature and informs strategies for passing domestic workers’ bills in states and cities across the U.S.

Intersectionality as a Theoretical Frame for Studying Domestic Work

Domestic workers face multiple, overlapping forms of oppression, which together cause their labor to be undervalued and underpaid. These forms of oppression relate to the ways in which typical definitions and valuations of ‘women’s work’ undermine domestic worker’s fight for formal labor protections. The analysis in this paper hinges on critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw’s notion of “intersectionality” to situate the plight of domestic worker in “multiple

grounds of identity,” including gender, race and ethnicity, class, and immigration status (1991, p. 1245). Data shows that white domestic workers receive higher wages than their Latinx, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Black counterparts – although even those receiving relatively higher wages still experience overall low pay, which represents the larger undervaluation of this industry (Burnham and Theodore 2012). Further, undocumented domestic workers face additional hardships including lower wages and more abusive working conditions overall, but fewer complain due to fear of having their immigration status used against them in retaliation efforts by employers (Burnham and Theodore 2012).

Wage differentials between white workers and workers of color, and the frequent experience of abusive treatment among women of color including undocumented immigrant women, necessitate centering intersectionality in discussions of domestic work. An example of what it means for an analysis to be intersectional is recognizing the structural elements involved in subordinating ‘women’s work’ as work for women of color, including migrant women. As Budd (2016) points out, the marginalization of some work to women of color and/or migrant women “reflect[s] a belief in a natural social hierarchy” under which “less desirable forms of work are conceptualized as a curse of the lower classes,” a notion that allows this work to remain invisible to elites who perceive themselves as performing valuable labor (Budd 2016, p. 32). Moreover, retuning briefly to the history of domestic labor as something with “ancient and modern association with slavery,” it is evident that those who perform this work are “universally dehumanized” by association with low-wage caring work even today (Rollins 1985, p. 59). Employing intersectionality as a framework starts with recognizing that the interaction of racial and gender inequities lead to the devaluation of domestic labor.

Some of this entrenchment stems from middle-class women solidifying their place in the labor force and transferring their reproductive labor to women of color, poor women, and increasingly, migrant women from the Global South (Hochschild 2002). As Nakano Glenn put it, rather than challenging the “inequitable gender division of labor” in the domestic sphere, middle-class women chose to “slough off the more burdensome tasks onto more oppressed groups of women” (1992, p. 7). Within this racialized division of labor in the domestic sphere, scholars have presented multiple frameworks from which to conceptualize domestic work (Nakano Glenn 1992; Duffy 2005), two of which include spiritual and menial work (Macdonald 2010).

Macdonald’s (2010) analysis of spiritual and menial work further highlights the racialization and class-based nature of domestic labor but categorizes both forms of work as ‘reproductive labor.’ Spiritual aspects of reproductive labor are defined by white middle-class or elite mothers raising children by *choosing* to spend quality time with them and tightly retaining their authority as the primary parent in relation to the nanny they employ (Macdonald 2010). In the same household, a nanny would perform the more “menial mothering tasks of daily interaction with children,” plus additional work such as cooking and cleaning (Macdonald 2010). From the various conceptualizations of care work, it is clear that the division of labor in the domestic sphere is highly gendered, racialized and class-based, the consequences of which can be seen in the reproduction and maintenance of social hierarchies that lead to a devaluing of domestic work writ large. Still, the portrayal of the transfer of domestic labor between women based on race and class differences reifies the notion that women are intrinsically accountable for reproductive labor and fails to acknowledge the benefits of paid care work to men, family members, and society at large (Duffy 2005). It is important to understand domestic work based on a more inclusive framework, because the labor of domestic workers quickly becomes

invisible when it is relegated to a notion of reproductive labor that is isolated from more valued versions of social reproduction. In the analysis below, I use the history and theoretical frameworks previously discussed to critically examine the legislative process that led to the passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Right with the goal of understanding how historical structural inequalities impact policymaking.

Data and Methods

Data Sources

This paper examines the passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights with the goal of critically analyzing how race, gender, and class play themselves out in the legislative life of the bill. This project takes the form of a case study, employed because the subject of examination (the bill) has identifiable boundaries, a perceptible timeline, and accessible key actors (Creswell 2007). Using qualitative data from two main sources, document review and interviews, I develop an in-depth analysis of the passage of this bill.

Documents reviewed in this study include the original draft of the coalition-authored bill introduced in 2013 and the final passed version in 2016. Comparing the original language of the bill with the passed version reveals the real consequences of the negotiations made as this bill underwent the legislative process. While document review is an important component of this study, the fourteen interviews I conducted with labor organizers and activists, lawmakers, academics, and one policy advocate in this field were critical in revealing the story of how this bill was passed. I chose to speak with interviewees from these main groups due to their involvement with the process of passing the bill, from researching domestic work to recruiting activists and speaking directly with legislators. While the policy advocate I interviewed was the

main drafter of this bill, labor organizers and activists advocated for it in a coalition that succeeded in seeing this legislation through to its ratification into law. Lawmakers were important insofar as they were the decision-makers needing to be convinced of the necessity of this law. Academics studying domestic workers provided a theoretical framework from which to view the sociopolitical and historical narrative surrounding this legislation. Through interviews with representatives of the aforementioned groups (see Appendix 1 for a table of interviewees), I document both the practical and theoretical challenges the coalition faced leading up to the passing of this legislation. I used a semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix 2 for interview guides) that was tailored to each of the respondent groups and stayed as consistent as possible in my questioning during the roughly one-hour interviews. This allowed me to undertake a holistic analysis of the passage of this bill from inception to being signed into law.

Data Analysis

After completing all interviews, I created transcriptions and coded transcripts by reading the text line-by-line and highlighting and grouping emergent themes. From each interview, I gained more insight into the overall narrative of this bill's life course and the obstacles faced when attempting to get more robust and protective legislation passed. Each transcript was referenced prior to the next interview to better inform questions I should emphasize, although the semi-structured interview guide remained the same. Throughout this process of periodically reviewing my data, larger themes began to emerge organically which informed what data I then pursued. By combining data gathered from document review with the consistencies identified across various interviews, I was able to define codes and classify central ideas that emerged, thus allowing me to establish themes that defined the process of passing of this legislation.

Researcher Positionality

This project began with an interest in domestic workers' labor rights from my own childhood experience of being raised by my grandmother, who worked as a housecleaner. During interviews, I revealed that I had personal experience with domestic work as a way to introduce myself and explain my interest in a topic that is not understudied but rather undervalued as a body of knowledge. In this way, I used my identity to relate to organizers, activists, lawmakers, and academics who cared about this issue, which I view as a strength. As a young, Hispanic/white woman who has never worked as a domestic worker, I was able to walk the line of insider/outsider in a way that I believe made my interviewees confident in my genuine interest in this topic and ability to tell this story with a nuance that accounts for the intricacies of domestic workers' intersecting identities. Finally, I made no qualms about approaching this study with a subjectivity that was openly supportive of this bill and recognized the historic importance of legislation protecting domestic workers. I did not feign objectivity and acknowledged my support of the bill, which may have impacted my interviews; however, I was deliberate in keeping my insertions about the importance of this bill to a minimum in formal interview settings.

Findings and Analysis

The four emergent themes in the critical analysis of the passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights focus on determining if the bill truly is 'landmark legislation' even in its whittled down state; analyzing the cultural shift that had to occur for lawmakers to see themselves as employers; exploring the enforcement issues presented by the private home being

a workplace; and determining what it means to wield the power of the larger labor movement. These themes center around the idea of domestic workers being classified as a different kind of laborer, somehow inhabiting the space between traditional unions and non-traditional, emerging worker centers. From their need for special protections due to their untraditional working environments to their need to wield power in the larger labor movement, domestic workers require both basic labor rights and special protections under the law. However, in a legislative environment not conducive to workers' rights in general, domestic workers and their advocates needed to secure basic protections and build on this foundation through relationships with other governmental agencies to achieve their goals and reinforce enactment of the laws in place.

Brief Timeline of H.B. 1288

As further context for the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights, the timeline in Table I shows the cumbersome road to getting the bill passed. This bill was originally introduced to the Illinois State Senate by then-Senator Ira Silverstein in 2011, who borrowed language from the then-recently passed New York Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights. At this time, State Senator Silverstein had not contacted community groups or advocates and, therefore, did not have a critical mass of advocates or workers to back up this legislative push, so this version of the bill died. In the meantime, the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) was beginning to survey domestic workers in cities throughout the U.S., including Chicago. The research and reports that followed these surveys were instrumental in developing evidence-based talking points for meetings with legislators and allies. After the initial coalition was built from local Chicago labor/community and policy advocacy organizations, with backing from the NDWA, recruitment of domestic workers themselves began. After several trips to Springfield involving

lobbying on behalf and on the part of domestic workers, the bill was negotiated down to its current state, passed by both houses of the Illinois General Assembly, and signed by former Governor Rauner 2016, taking effect in January 2017.

Table I. Illinois Domestic Workers Bill of Rights Timeline¹

2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New York passes first Domestic Workers Bill of Rights
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January: National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) begins pilot survey of domestic workers in various cities in the U.S. ● Illinois State Senator Silverstein introduces copy of NY bill in Illinois with no community input/involvement ● Bill passes through Labor Committee ● Bill dies on IL Senate floor
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chicago labor organizing and advocacy groups participate in NDWA Caring Across Generations campaign (Arise, Jobs with Justice, Latino Union, Women Employed, Shriver Center, others) ● October: First meeting at Arise to initiate/form coalition (Arise, SEIU Healthcare, LU, Shriver, WE, Heartland Alliance; all staff, no workers yet) ● November: Coalition has call with Ai-jen Poo from NDWA to enlist support ● Policy advocate drafts first bill
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January 5th: full meeting at Arise reviewing draft bill, Bill language is finalized by the coalition. ● Coalition has meeting with Illinois State Representative Lisa Hernandez to request her as lead sponsor ● Coalition meet with legislators throughout the year
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bill unable to get out of Senate Labor Committee ● Bill dies
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New bill is drafted by policy advocate, with full input and participation by partner organizations and workers including Arise, LU, Mujeres Latinas en Acción ● Coalition introduces new bill in House via Rep. Hernandez and Senate via Silverstein at same time; new bill is stripped down version. ● May: Bill passes House on May 29th 2015 (75 Yes, 31 No, 1 not present) ● Sept 9th: Full Senate reading of the bill. Only 36 Senate Dems present, not veto-proof majority; worried about having the votes. Coalition, including workers decide not to call for vote. Senate vote delayed.
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued hard lobbying in Senate ● May: Bill passes Senate on May 11, 2016 with 53 Yes votes ● August 15th: Rauner signs bill into law

¹ See Appendix 3 for extended timeline courtesy of Arise Chicago.

2017

- Bill takes effect in January of this year at request of Department of Labor
- Bill enforcement is low
- Coalition continues to meet, worker involvement and education is emphasized

Credit: Arise Chicago 2016; with additions and edits made by author.

Landmark Bill?: Whittling Down to the Basics

One emerging theme from the passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights revolves around understanding the political struggle between getting a basic set of protections under the law for domestic workers and critically questioning how to move forward to get to fairness with other workers. It is critical to analyze what was palatable for Illinois lawmakers and what negotiations had to be made in order to understand what constitutes 'basic' protections and what additions need to be made to achieve 'fairness.' Table II below demonstrates how the original draft of the bill compares to the one that was eventually passed and signed into law by former Governor Rauner. As defined by both versions of this bill, "domestic work" includes services such as: "housekeeping; house cleaning; home management; nanny services including childcare and child monitoring; caretaking or home health care services of individuals including sick, convalescing, or elderly individuals and individuals with a disability; laundering; cooking; companion services; chauffeuring; and other household services for members of households or their guests in or about a private home or residence or any other location where the domestic work is performed" (Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights Act 2016).

Table II. Comparison of Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights Act: SB1708² vs. HB 1288³

	SB1708 (Original Draft)	HB1288 (Passed Version)
Basic Protections		
Illinois Human Rights Act	✓	✓
Minimum Wage Law	✓	✓
Wages of Women & Minors Act	✓	✓
One Day Rest in Seven Act	✓	✓
"Special" Protections		
Written Contracts	✓	
Duration of Shifts	✓	
Meal Breaks	✓	
Paid Time Off	✓	
Privacy Rights	✓	
Sleep and Rest Periods	✓	
Recordkeeping Requirements	✓	
Wage Protections	✓	
Mandating Pay for Scheduled Work	✓	

Anna Jakubek is a lead organizer at Arise, a labor organization key to advocating for this legislation. As Jakubek put it, “in the beginning, the first [Illinois] Domestic Workers’ Bill of

² [Full Text of SB1708](#)

³ [Full Text of HB1288](#)

Rights was awesome, [it] was great, and [included] a lot of provisions,” while the final legislation that was passed was “really minimal, bare minimum.” The bill as it stands today is solely a removal of exclusions from four existing Illinois state laws: the Minimum Wage Law, the Illinois Human Rights Act, the One Day of Rest in Seven Act, and the Wages of Women and Minors Act. Jakubek specified that the original draft’s extra inclusions beyond protection under these laws included paid time off and mandatory written contracts. Jakubek also said that specifications for what should be provided for live-in workers were included, which required locks on workers’ doors, a bed within a private room to which no one else has access, and broad descriptions of appropriate meals that should be provided. Even though the coalition clearly opted for the tactic of presenting a big bill – analogous to a “Christmas tree with all the ornaments,” as policy advocate Julia Hanson described it – and negotiating down to something agreeable, organizers, academics, and a policy advocate all acknowledged that the bill was ultimately whittled down to the most basic level.

The negotiations that took place were centered around the idea that pieces of the legislation were too specific, which meant that the bill got narrowed down until the necessary votes to pass were secured. One lawmaker, Illinois State Senator Dale Righter confirms that, while he and his colleagues agreed that something should be done about the exclusion of domestic workers, there were provisions in the original version of the bill that were too “far reaching.” Specifically, Senator Righter stressed the original bill’s specificity as a peculiarity among other state laws, because it attempted to “dictate the terms of a contract between an employer and an employee.” Former Majority Leader of the Illinois House of Representatives Barbara Flynn Currie added that including too many specifications became to be seen by some as “very cumbersome” in the political negotiation process that risked the state being too heavily

involved with the relationship between a homeowner and those who take care of their home and children. Representative Currie went on to conjecture that the very fact that the bill was rewritten with less specificity was precisely what allowed it to garner support. Putting in a more basic framework allowed the bill to pass with near-unanimous support in both houses of the Illinois General Assembly. As an organizer at the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Anna Rubin, stated that the bill “was so stripped down that it was hard [for lawmakers] to say no.”

Thus, while lawmakers on both sides of the aisle could agree that domestic workers deserved *basic* protections, they were not all supportive of accounting for specific protections that the nature of domestic work may necessitate. Importantly, Nik Theodore, an academic whose co-authored report on domestic workers continues to inform domestic worker bills across the country, pushed back on the “irony” of legislators opposing safeguards for workers beyond basic protections, especially for a population that has been traditionally excluded from all labor rights. For Theodore, this opposition “encapsulates the politics around this that. . . maybe we can bring them up to this bare minimum, but we are not going to afford them any other protections, even those that are designed around the peculiarities of the occupation . . . We're not going to give them something more.” Thus, while many interviewees agreed that legislation getting negotiated down is common, the roots of why special protections were so vehemently opposed for domestic workers is rooted in a legislative history particular to this population of workers. Several organizers commented on the toll traveling to Springfield took on domestic workers who went to advocate for themselves and how the let-down of a more basic bill makes it difficult to inspire people to continue the fight. Anna Rubin emphasized the strategic challenge that faced the coalition when deciding to call this legislation *The Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights* – and then trying to add more protections in the future. As she put it, coalition members worried

that the conclusive sounding name of a very basic bill would restrict them from going back and adding more protections, because people might think “well, we passed the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. You know, like what else could there be?”

Nonetheless, interviewees came to the consensus that legislation is a critical lever to setting a base of protections and that going through the legislative process is a necessary aspect of securing foundational rights under laws already in place. Bill sponsor Elizabeth Hernandez expressed her support of the bill even in its more basic state:

Many would say the bill was watered down. When you have an initiative or a policy change or something very, very strong and difficult, the outcome is not going to be the same. It's going to be sort of [like] bits and pieces will be negotiated off to get the bigger piece. The ultimate goal was to get rights, and to be identified as a workforce, and to start looking at the domestic workers in that light. In the end, that is a huge step forward, because then you start working on those pieces that may have been pulled out.

To include domestic workers in existing legislation is to finally recognize them as legitimate laborers and works to begin changing the mindset that excluded them initially. Now that they have secured the floor of labor protections, moving forward, the coalition is focused on working with the Pritzker Department of Labor to get domestic workers on an equal playing field with other workers. The passage of this legislation created the path for a relationship with enforcement agencies in the Illinois state government that they did not have prior, because these departments do not deal with workers excluded from labor law. Further, because legislation takes a long time, Julia Hanson notes that setting standards and undergoing a “regulatory push” with the Department of Labor is an attractive option, because advocates have the “jurisdiction to set up the basics.” Forging an equal playing field with other workers can mean creating tools for employer households to pay employment taxes and setting aside funds for sick pay and vacation time, which becomes achievable only with relationships with institutions like the Illinois Department of Labor and other regulatory agencies. To set up further regulations and standards

through agencies within the government is critical, but lauded executive director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance Ai-jen Poo also highlighted the extent to which all workers must fight for rights that will never be voluntarily given but rather must be mandated through law and policy.

Every interviewee stated that they believed going through the legislative process was worth it, even if the bill was negotiated down, to give domestic workers basic labor rights and open the door to bolstering their protections. However, while this ‘landmark legislation’ was critical in establishing a floor of basic protections, it is only a first step. As Jakubek powerfully put it: “This is not over. The bill is really shitty, and not nice.” Sharing in her mixed emotions is academic Carolina Sternberg, who teaches a course on domestic work at DePaul University: “I was so happy when the bill was passed, but, at the same time, yes it's very restrictive.” While Nik Theodore contended that the legislative process was a critical lever for change, he also acknowledged that it is also “insufficient.” The process of passing this bill demonstrates the possibility of both celebrating hard-fought organizing victories and also being critical of what we expect from entities protecting workers from exploitation, both in their need for special protections and in their need for the most basic human rights.

Cultural Shift: Seeing the Home as a Place of Employment

According to interviewees, there was no hard opposition from formal employer or business organizations that worked against the passage of this legislation. Legislators were the main opponents, because they were unaware of the fact that domestic workers were explicitly excluded from labor protections in the first place and then struggled with the notion that domestic workers were employees. As policy advocate Julia Hanson put it:

Nobody thinks of them as employees, right? They think of them, I don't know, [as a] member of their family? But then, [does that mean] they treat their family members not too well? ... It is a culture shift and trying to say 'no, these people are your employees,' and 'think of yourself as an employer.'

Domestic worker-activists and advocates had to work to shift a mindset which envisioned domestic workers and their employers as having a "different kind of relationship" that did not include formal labor protections. Key to passing this bill was convincing lawmakers that the domestic workers they employed rendered their relationship as an employer-employee one, and that workers were not just "giving a favor to someone," as Sternberg characterized it. Bill sponsor Elizabeth Hernandez explained that her role was largely focused on educating General Assembly members to see domestic workers as workers and giving members "that background and really getting them to view...[the] kind of work these workers were doing ... in a much more dignified way." Further, Jakubek's colleague at Arise, Communications Director Shelly Ruzicka, shared this story highlighting how far domestic workers' clients will go to distance themselves from the 'employer' title:

My coworker Adam said – he grew up around La Grange area – and he said he knew other people who had people cleaning their homes and they were all, [or] mostly Polish. And [employers] would say: 'my Polish lady.' They wouldn't say my cleaning lady. My Polish lady. Bizarre . . . especially when you're paying someone individually ... people don't think of themselves as employers.

Almost every organizer, policy advocate, and academic interviewed agreed that a consequence of this inability to accept oneself as an employer also translated into an inability to accept the private household as a place of employment, therefore making it necessary to ensure people understand their responsibility as employers through legislative means. However, changing this mindset was not easy, which can be seen in the extended amount of time it took to pass this bill – five years from introduction to signing – even with a Democratic majority in the legislature.

Given her experience in leading other states in passing domestic workers' bills, Ai-jen Poo noted that this process should not have been as difficult as it was, but that the deeply entrenched power differentials and "dynamics in the legislature" had to be contended with in the Illinois General Assembly. Anna Jakubek recalled that the coalition "went through very progressive senators that [were] generally voting very progressively," yet nevertheless faced opposition due to the legislators' own "personal roots" in the work. These personal biases, even if subconscious, were partially constituted of ignorance on the part of lawmakers of the exclusion faced by domestic workers. This legislative exclusion is rooted in decades of racism and sexism from political compromises of the past. Thus, the unwillingness of legislators to see domestic workers as employees harkens back to the history of domestic work as being highly racialized and gendered work. Carolina Sternberg who, in addition to teaching about domestic workers, also studies them in a larger geopolitical context, commented on the legacy of slavery as something with which the United States has not contended, making the domestic worker employer be situated similarly to an "owner in that regard." Sternberg continued to note that the forced positioning – societally and legally – of Black women in the household as domestic workers throughout American history is rooted in the continued racist "colonial...histor[ies] that countries live."

The idea that domestic work is about 'helping' someone or that women are naturally skilled to do this type of work, and therefore would be doing it anyway, are obstacles for securing formalized labor protections. Analía Rodríguez, executive director of Chicago labor organization Latino Union, is accustomed to working with immigrant women of color performing low-wage labor. In her recollection of barriers to passing this bill, she highlighted how important it was to fight against the entrenched notion that domestic work is labor which

women are already predisposed to perform, and that women are born with the responsibility and skills to do this work. To demonstrate this point further, Nik Theodore commented on the nature of the domestic work employee-employer relationship in the following way:

You're a member of the family, you know, we love you. And, as I remember, we wrote in the report, of course, when you're in an intimate setting, like a household, bonds of affection and maybe even love are going to form.

The result of this attitude toward domestic work characterizes it as a sector that cannot be legislated, because it is rooted in caring and love. Situating domestic workers within the larger imagination of the U.S., including in the perceptions of race, gender, and citizenship, has lasting consequences for the cultural shift that allows for the formalization of labor protections.

Nevertheless, even if educational campaigns run by organizers for lawmakers were effective for some in overcoming this inherited result of a fraught social, legal, and cultural past, other legislators remained hesitant. Carolina Sternberg asserted that legislators in Illinois are just “really, really conservative even if most of them are Democrats.” Nik Theodore confirmed that Illinois is “not a progressive state, but [it is] a liberal one.” Several interviewees alluded to the Illinois state legislature’s inability to work on a whole range of labor rights issues, like minimum wage or fair pay laws, as an explanation for why a legislature with a Democratic majority would take five years to pass a bill guaranteeing a vulnerable population basic worker protection. In this way, it becomes evident that the macro-level politics of state-level legislation, along with the historically-rooted biases of legislators, caused movement on this bill to be slow, gradually whittling down the content as it made its way through the legislature.

However, these findings also imply the question of how conservatism connects to opposing domestic workers’ labor rights. On a broad scale, Sternberg connected the neoliberalization of the economy and the opposition to increased government regulation that

follows to the more specific confusion over domestic workers as employees. Insofar as one accepts neoliberal objection to regulation to be a core tenet of conservatism, one can come to understand why it might be expected that more conservative legislators would oppose a bill attempting to regulate the home. Despite this political ideological framing, a fear of increased bureaucracy was shared among many members of the Illinois General Assembly, regardless of party. This sentiment is reflected in several interviews wherein organizers, academics, and lawmakers alike noted the fear and misunderstanding that accompanied the potential of getting sued over treatment of domestic workers. Representative Currie explained some potential legislator's fears about being sued for being "five minutes late getting home when we said we would be back from the theater" or working late and failing to promptly relieve their babysitter. As Representative Currie stated specifically, legislators were resistant to the bill largely due to the idea of having "the state breathing down [their] neck" or "someone from the Department of Labor [coming] to knock on [their] door and come in and see what [they are] doing." Accepting the private home as a place of employment was a blockage for many legislators. Whether that stems from unconscious sociohistorical influences or a possible subconscious desire to shirk employer responsibilities as employers remains unclear. Nonetheless, advocates' solution to successfully passing the legislation was education for decision-makers around how to talk about homes as places of employment.

Enforcement Issues: Pros and Cons of Using the Legislative Process for Change

For this bill to get passed, a cultural shift had to happen in the minds of legislators to view domestic workers as employees. Yet, even when this change occurred, domestic workers were not afforded the protections they deserve as laborers. Some of the pushback on the bill from

legislators and the Department of Labor under then-Governor Rauner was based on issues of how to enforce the bill and how much enforcement would cost. Many interviewees highlighted officials' confusion about how some of the specifications in the original bill would be enforced, particularly because domestic work is performed in private residences. Questions like, "How could [domestic work] possibly be a labor force where labor productions could be regulated effectively?" were representative of the concerns that interviewees said the Rauner Department of Labor and lawmakers expressed. This confusion is perhaps the result of domestic work being seen as failing to map onto traditional industrial labor regulation patterns, proving difficult to regulate for those accustomed to a narrow or strict definition of 'work.'

Representative Currie acknowledged the Department's financial resistance to the bill and claimed that they did not take "positions on the merits of a program" but rather follow instructions when told by the Governor's office to "oppose anything that's going to cost money – because we don't have any money." The former legislative liaison from the Illinois Department of Labor, Chris Wieneke, claimed that enforcement of the bill would cost \$300,000, which was too much for Rauner's Department of Labor, so they initially opposed that version (Newsradio WTX 2015). Illinois State Representative Jay Hoffman, former chairperson of the Labor and Commerce Committee, further highlighted this resistance to financial allocation for the bill by stating that the Rauner Department of Labor was "consistently against any bill that would increase their workload." According to several members of the coalition, using the financial data from New York proving that enforcement would not be too expensive was key to getting the Department of Labor to allow the bill to continue through the legislative process. Due to the fact that domestic workers were not aware of their rights and thus were not bringing forth cases, as proven in New York, passing the bill became a possibility. Showing that the number of claims in

New York after they passed their version of the bill was low allowed the coalition to show that the bill was inexpensive and, therefore, worth passing. Bill sponsor Elizabeth Hernandez agreed and confirmed that showing that the “bill is not going to be overly burden[some] on the budget” is important and that “if you get across where it's minimal costs, that gives it much more weight, [and] it gives it much more support.” While the general consensus regarding the Department’s opposition to the bill was solely about budgetary restrictions, organizer Analía Rodríguez points out that the Rauner administration was making an ideological decision when it chose to allow the bill to pass only after it was cheap enough, given that a government’s allocation of money is inherently ideological.

At least partially, what made this bill cost-effective was the fact that workers did not know about their rights or were too afraid to bring cases forward, which is evidenced by several labor organizations bolstering their ‘Know Your Rights’ seminars for domestic workers after the passage of the bill. However, with limited resources already having been spent on the push to pass this bill, organizer Anna Rubin noted how several organizations had low capacity to “implement an education phase” and the work of spreading knowledge of domestic workers’ rights has now fallen heavily on a few already over-burdened organizations. This implies that the crux of the issue is that power is given selectively and is given only so long as the result does not destabilize the status quo. Policy advocate Julia Hanson even shared her feeling that Rauner’s Department of Labor was not prosecuting or adjudicating any cases even after the bill was passed, indicating that the application of the rules in this bill was not a priority. In this way, the lack of support and enforcement of the bill by the Rauner Department of Labor offers credence to the notion that this bill may be in danger of becoming symbolic policy.

The necessity and subsequent dangers of ‘symbolic policy’ are complex and sometimes opposing. This legislation is positively symbolic insofar as it uplifts domestic workers’ issues and starts a conversation around these issues. However, depending solely on the legislative process to create change turns negative when it strips bills like this one and makes them into something palatable but not robust in their protections (and enforcement of these regulations) for vulnerable worker populations. On an even more expansive level, Anna Rubin again powerfully questioned “how much more than symbolic [the bill] can be while federal immigration policies are what they are,” thus implying that while the legal/political environment is so dangerous for non-citizens, policies that can protect them may not even be able to be utilized fully. Policy advocate Julia Hanson also referred to the coalition’s “dilemma” of balancing enforcement with education of people, like undocumented workers, who, in this political landscape, do not “feel comfortable coming forward now” and went on to reaffirm that “it was always going to be hard, but now it's even harder for anybody to affirm their rights in any way.” Issues with enforcement of this bill are therefore linked to both the past inaction on the part of the Department of Labor and other enforcement agencies along with the lack of education among or dangerous legal landscape in place for many domestic workers.

Wielding the Power of the Labor Movement: All Workers Matter?

One strategy for increasing rights for domestic workers is fighting for more robust workers protections and minimum wages for all, with the explicit inclusion of domestic workers. Julia Hanson categorized domestic workers as “part of the low-wage workforce that is...disrespected” and particularly emphasized their place in the growing gig economy. In this way, a central idea that Arise’s Shelly Ruzicka pointed out was that, even after the bill’s passage,

the coalition continues to consider how they are “very intentionally adding rights on for domestic workers as [they are] building more things out.” Julia Hanson noted that she worked to include domestic workers purposefully in the language of the city of Chicago’s minimum wage bill. Still, multiple interviewees acknowledged that the process of bolstering rights for all workers remains a difficult task in the current sociopolitical climate, specifically pointing to domestic workers call for paid time off, which other low-wage workers still do not have. Clearly, working in conjunction with the broader labor movement fighting for workers’ rights is essential and allows for greater power-building. The situating of domestic workers within the larger contemporary labor movement, on their own terms, allows them to take part in the more robust popular support for labor in the growing “public concern about inequality and about low wages” that renowned labor-focused academic Ruth Milkman pointed out.

With this acceptance of domestic workers into the larger movement comes the question of how advocates and organizers can attend to the particular needs of domestic workers given their unique working environments. Anna Rubin emphasized issues of communication and relatability that can cause differences among those in the labor movement, pointing to the fact that most unions are “multigenerational white” and function in English whereas worker centers are more oriented to the immigrant community and function in other languages. Because “traditional vehicles have really failed” domestic workers, according to activist Ai-jen Poo, domestic worker groups have had to find other strategies for their advocacy, which has fostered a spirit of creativity and innovation that makes for “some of the best organizing...in the history of organizing in this country.” Nevertheless, in the absence of large-scale social movements regarding domestic workers’ labor rights, there appears to be a tension between joining the larger

labor movement and needing special protections due to historical exclusion and intersectional disadvantages.

These tensions, combined with the fact that domestic workers perform their labor in the private sphere of the household, caused many interviewees to note that domestic workers are more susceptible to various forms of abuse due to the nature of their work, in their ‘hidden’ working environment. In the original draft of the bill, there were inclusions to address these specific needs, including contracts with scheduling rules, live-in worker needs, and anti-sexual harassment language. In interviews, the idea that domestic workers face different forms of sexual harassment arose several times, making sexual harassment their number one issue as opposed to something like higher wages. From stories she has heard from domestic workers over the years, Anna Jakubek told stories of employers “leaving pornography” lying around casually and “walking naked in the house,” as examples of less-overt forms of sexual harassment that domestic workers cannot easily report to the police, which leave them in complicated positions. Furthermore, this particular ‘hidden’ version of sexual harassment points to the larger issue of domestic workers being at the mercy of their employers in a way that laborers in more formal employment settings are not. Harkening back to the refusal of some to see their private homes as places of employment, so too does this extend to the special abuses domestic workers are exposed to from their vulnerability in this ‘private sphere.’ Domestic workers’ experiences vary widely due to having a range of “great employers” and “really bad ones” who take advantage of their peculiar working situation. Further, many domestic workers are undocumented immigrants, making them even less likely to go through typical avenues to report these abuses and hindering this “type of activism and organizing,” as Carolina Sternberg emphasized. Analía Rodríguez

underscored the ways in which immigrant labor is treated as “disposable,” rendering many domestic workers susceptible to accepting jobs at unfair wages with bad working conditions.

Maggie Zylinksa is a domestic worker-activist and Arise board member who was integral in the Illinois coalition and travelled to Springfield several times to speak with legislators and testify in front of representatives. She explained that an aspect of domestic workers’ precarity in the labor force is the fact that many are immigrant women who send money back to their families in their country of origin. She highlighted how difficult it was for her to survive on extremely low wages while supporting herself and family at home, making it even more urgent to carve out a space within a powerful movement while also ensuring that the needs of those at the margins are not neglected and have legal recourse for mistreatment.

More specific issues that came up in interviews had to do with unfair contracting practices and scheduling peculiarities. Because of the desire for flexibility in employer-employee domestic work relationships – something that resonates with the larger neoliberal service economy model – these laborers are often taken advantage of in more subtle ways with few options for recourse. When asked for an example of a critical aspect of the bill that was negotiated out, policy advocate Hanson responded that the exclusion of the written contract was one of the most significant missing pieces of the bill. Avoiding the “he said/she said” nature of a verbal contract by having terms of an agreement written and signed by both parties would allow domestic workers to not only legitimize their sector but also avoid wage theft. In the words of domestic worker-activist Maggie Zylinksa, employers would often agree to services at a certain price and then would say:

‘Oh, maybe you can change the sheets, maybe you can do the laundry.’ And it's like, you get the same money, but they add work on top of what you're supposed to do. So that becomes a problem later on.

This is a common occurrence for domestic workers and is particular to their industry insofar as they are individual contractors who face high levels of precarity in the workforce, including low wages and unpredictable schedules from a lack of enforceable contracts. Julian Hanson noted that scheduling was as an area where it is “so clear that that’s where people are taken advantage of” with the “thoughtlessness” accompanied by running late, asking workers to stay a few more hours, and not paying them higher wages accordingly. For example, because nannies will not typically refuse to continue to monitor children because their parents are late, domestic workers are exploited in ways that other workers may not experience, which necessitates special labor protections that other occupations are afforded.

With all this said, most interviewees agreed that domestic workers have a place in the larger labor movement even if they do require special protections. This is summed up by Carolina Sternberg:

I think it's very necessary [to be a part of the larger labor movement]. This should become a larger movement, like any other social movement ... The more people that are united, I think they can push more into what they need in terms of general protections [and] more basic protections that are applicable to each state or city.

In effect, data from interviews shows that while domestic workers do need special labor protections due to their particular needs, they *also* must be a part of a broader social movement that fights for worker protections for all, including typically marginalized groups. Organizer Analía Rodríguez envisioned a labor movement that includes domestic workers as an integral part for larger power building but simultaneously accounts for the times that organizations need to go in to fight for themselves. In this space of fighting for expanded labor rights and accounting for the specific nature of domestic work is an example given by Anna Rubin that highlights the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA). She noted that domestic work is the “work that makes all other work possible” and should be considered “sacred, protected work.” The kind of

solidarity that organizations like the NDWA create is powerful, which is demonstrated by Maggie Zylinska's powerful remark that:

At the end of the day, a lot of cleaning people, myself included, we just felt like we're alone . . . and nobody else has that problem. So, it was nice to go to the meetings and to the trainings. . . They took us [to] Washington D.C. that was like 5,000 women leaders. And it was overwhelming that there [are] so many people fighting for the same goal – to [push for] change for domestic workers for the better.

The solitude of domestic work creates the necessity for larger unity with the low-wage labor movement as a means of improving the lives of these laborers in a collective way. On a more expansive scale, Illinois State Representative Hernandez stated that she views the bill as one “that has broadened the equal rights movement for women.” Nik Theodore also remarked that many people who study labor are beginning to acknowledge that domestic workers, along with restaurant workers and day laborers, are not “alt-labor” but rather “are in fact, the 21st century labor movement.” The integration of domestic workers as the new labor movement is critical in recognizing the shift to a service economy and legitimizing their sphere of work.

Implications: Lessons from the Passage of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights

Looking to the Future of Protections for Domestic Workers

One central recommendation coming from the findings presented here is that domestic worker advocates, organizers, and employers, must be present wherever legislation is being moved to ensure this legislation is enforced after passage. From making certain that enforcement agencies are adjudicating cases to informing workers of their rights, the Illinois Domestic Workers Coalition continues to work to make domestic workers' rights real. Domestic worker advocates in other states, cities, or counties may follow the lead of worker centers and advocacy organizations in Chicago by implementing educational programming and continuing to support

protective labor legislation for all workers. With a new gubernatorial administration in place more amenable to supporting workers' rights, advocates are also hopeful that enforcement will be more robust and opportunities for further protections will be available.

As a society, the shift toward seeing domestic workers as employees still needs to occur on a much larger scale. Each bill that gets passed brings us closer to this paradigm shift, but for the recently proposed federal domestic workers bill to garner the necessary support, bills across the country need to continue to help push people on smaller scales. However, such a shift is especially difficult given the gendered, racialized, and immigration-centered nature of this faction of labor, which reveals a tension between concentrating on the legislative push for a domestic workers' bill on a national scale versus on smaller advocacy scales in states, cities, and counties across the country.

Universal Family Care

As the American population continues to age and women increasingly solidify their place in the labor market, it is critical to consider what happens when people cannot afford the care they need for their children and elderly family members. Many working- and middle-class families who require care for their loved ones cannot afford it, which does not necessitate lowering domestic workers' wages to unfair levels but rather requires policy responses. In essence, people's wages do not match up with the cost of living. As organizer Anna Rubin recalled:

I think I remember just a lot of concern around both the cost of that kind of caregiving around the clock or daily care . . . and the provisions around time off and days off and overtime pay or, or time and people just feeling like the reality of those individuals who need care is that they need the care. And the reality of those who are providing the funding for those who need care is that they don't necessarily have the money they need to receive that care.

With rising intra-country inequality, it is incumbent upon policymakers to critically analyze legislation that would allow for families to receive the care they need while also protecting domestic workers' rights. One such supplemental policy is Universal Family Care, a proposal making its way through the policy world as a solution to the care deficit. Universal Family Care is "a public family care insurance fund to make care affordable and accessible to all," under which workers and employers would contribute to a social insurance fund and be able to pull from it when they need funding for care (Veghte et al 2019). This policy, in part a project of National Domestic Workers Alliance and backed by Ai-jen Poo, presents a new, innovative way to think about domestic work in the policy sphere and how increasing income security and families' ability to fund care will benefit both domestic workers and their employers alike.

Politics and the Role of Lawmakers

Lawmakers can aid in bolstering domestic workers' rights by being more aware of the labor happening in their own homes and responsive to the plight of low-wage workers at large. As leaders in their communities and power-holders in representative bodies, lawmakers are uniquely empowered to model accountability when it comes to domestic workers being considered employees. Additionally, focusing on electing allies of the labor movement is a necessity for continuing the work the Illinois Domestic Workers' Coalition has pushed forward in their state. Electing progressive candidates who will go to bat for domestic workers' special protections is important in aligning political goals with organizing goals in a Midwestern liberal state. Further, legislators' personal attitudes being so central in policy is something that must be contended with in this bill. Being acutely conscious of the ways in which lawmakers' personal experience impact policy decisions will allow for more representation of constituents' voices and

contemplation of recommendations from workers and those advocating on their behalf. The fact that legislators' personal experiences with hiring domestic workers was such an integral aspect of the opposition this bill faced represents a failure of policymakers to combine constituents' voices and the education of policy area experts to make sound decisions. These considerations will become especially important in future years as the care economy grows and the need for domestic labor becomes increasingly central in the American service economy.

Lessons from Organizers, Advocates, and Academics

Organizers in Illinois pointed out how critical it was to learn from other domestic worker bills of rights across the nation, but also highlighted that it was important to contextualize legislation within their own region. Further, organizers and academics noted that using every avenue available, including getting Department of Labor regulations put into place can lead to the same result as legislation without going through such an arduous legislative process. Additionally, it is critical to acknowledge the differing roles and lenses of policy advocates organizers, academics, and in this space and consider what that means for policy change. While policy advocates build relationships with lawmakers that allow them to gauge their hesitations and concerns about aspects of bills, organizers connect with domestic workers themselves to do the same. Academics studying domestic labor provide evidence-based knowledge for organizers to employ in speaking with legislators and the public. In this way, policy advocates, organizers, and academics work together to forge legislative action by employing their individual strengths to advocate for policy change.

Organizers also highlighted how centering domestic workers' voices in their advocacy enabled them to get legislators to understand their employer-employee relationship with this

population of laborers, thus allowing for smoother passage of this bill. Listening to domestic workers also impacted what aspects of legislation were critical, including their placement of sexual harassment above wage concerns. Critically, recognizing that domestic workers are often also undocumented workers with a precarious place in the informal labor market is the only way to continue to revitalize the larger labor movement. Domestic workers acting in solidarity with the larger labor movement, but also emphasizing their particular needs within this sphere, is a critical balance to ensuring protections on their own terms. Finally, making domestic worker employers allies in future advocacy for greater protections in Illinois and other states is an important tool for building more influence and power.

Discussion and Conclusion

In my study of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights, I have shown that the process of solidifying safeguards for domestic workers under Illinois state law was fraught with historical, cultural, and political obstructions that impeded the ability of the bill to pass more quickly with greater worker protections. Through interviews with community organizers, advocates, lawmakers, and academics, this study finds that the entrenched politics of the Illinois state legislature combined with the deeply ingrained idea of domestic work as lacking value, invisible, and un-regulatable caused this bill to be stripped down to merely removing exclusions for domestic workers from existing state laws. Interview data supports the overall view that, through the educational efforts of domestic worker organizers and advocates, lawmakers were able to recognize the need for a basic set of protections under law while remaining hesitant about adding special protections like employee-employer contracts and safeguards for live-in workers. However, special protections for workers of a vast variety already exist, like regulations on hours

and specific safety codes for truck drivers and pilots, so it is not irrational to think that domestic workers might be afforded worker protections suitable to their unique working context. Part of the process of educating lawmakers was prompting a cultural shift that included the recognition of domestic workers as employees and necessitated the view that the 'private' sphere becomes less private when one brings employees into that realm. Importantly, the findings here maintain the notion that the Midwest is a particular region of the U.S. where Democrats hold a majority but experience high "potential volatility of elections in the region" (Black and Black 2007, p. 126). The idea that Illinois is a liberal but not necessarily progressive state may impact the willingness of even Democratic representatives to support bolstering domestic workers' rights, which is a critical area for further research.

Most interviewees questioned the lack of enforcement of the bill after passage and expressed disappointment at the fact that this legislation was only able to get passed after it was shown to not be a financial burden to the state, because the experience in New York suggested that few domestic workers would make claims to investigate. While it is common for government enforcement agencies to question the costliness of new legislation, given the historical exclusion of domestic workers from the law and their need for special protections given the particular nature of their workplace, it would seem passing more protective laws for this population of workers is warranted. Often working alone and out of the purview of the public eye, domestic workers do not just require fairness with other workers but require special protections to safeguard them from the hidden exploitation they face. To go beyond fairness, or equality, with other workers would mean achieving job quality equity for domestic workers through legislating protections suited to their specific needs. Interview data shows that recognizing the place of domestic workers at the core, not at the margins, of the new labor

movement is an important aspect of the larger power building occurring among low-wage workers in the face of increasing structural inequality and labor market fissure.

While there have been reviews of the challenges faced by domestic workers' bills in New York and California (Hobson 2010 and Poo 2011), there have not been any qualitative studies of how structural racism and sexism influenced the passage of these bills. Moreover, there has not been any rigorous analysis of the legislative story of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights specifically. Prior research on domestic work has also tended to explore the theoretical nature of this labor (Macdonald 2010; Boris and Klein 2010; Silbaugh 1997), including the devaluing of women's work writ large rather than focusing in on the intersecting roles of organizing, policy advocacy, and research in process of securing policy change for this population. This paper addresses these gaps in the literature by presenting a deeper look into the intricacies of the process of passing a bill protecting vulnerable workers, from the research underpinnings, organizing strategies, and legislative activities. In addition, the research findings presented here can be used as a framework for organizing and political engagement in other states, cities, and counties as they continue to develop their own domestic worker bills of rights. Recognizing the importance of accounting for the political landscape, organizing capacity, and cultural histories in which these bills are being presented is an important insight of this research. Future domestic worker bills in varying political landscapes can take this account and apply relevant lessons to their own processes at the beginning stages, whether it be starting with an understanding that a cultural shift may need to occur or establishing how enforcement can be more robust.

These data are limited because I began studying the passage of this bill in 2019, approximately six years after the initial introduction of the coalition-sponsored domestic

workers' bill in the Illinois General Assembly. Because the bill was passed so long ago, most of my interviewees prefaced their statements by pointing out that their memories of the details of the process of passing the bill, including opposition or negotiations that took place, were a bit foggy. Another limitation of this study is that it only incorporates the voices of one domestic worker-activist. With greater resources and more accessibility, future research on this topic should be more intentional about analyzing the issue of domestic worker advocacy from the perspective of domestic workers themselves. This becomes especially critical when considering how undocumented workers feel about requiring written contracts that could potentially lead to greater danger to themselves and their citizenship status in the current political climate regarding immigration in the U.S. Additionally, a sociological study exploring the relational work that domestic workers perform in a 21st century neoliberal economy, including an analysis of their and their employers' attitudes about domestic work, would be an interesting avenue for future research. Understanding how people feel about their work and the nature of the relationship between domestic workers and their employers would aid in the process of developing understanding between the two entities, thus ensuring more safeguards for workers outside the scope of law and organizing initiatives.

Marrying historical background, feminist theoretical frameworks, and first-hand accounts of the Illinois Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights, this study offers a unique perspective into the process of passing public policy for traditionally excluded populations. I argue that policy change happens when policy advocates, organizers, activists, and researchers work together alongside the people who are impacted by these laws. When employing policy advocacy and legislative action for public good, the hope is that every bill passed improves on earlier bills, each becoming more comprehensive as more learning and advocacy occurs. As compared to

other states, like New York, Hawaii, and California, Illinois did not pass a bill that built upon the progress of those that preceded it. In addition to the resources spent, motivating people on the ground to be excited about building upon this bill is difficult from an organizing perspective when initial efforts were met with opposition and hesitation. Since Illinois passed its bill, cities like Seattle and Philadelphia have built upon the more basic Illinois legislation to include protections like mandatory contracts and paid leave. In this way, the carved-out Illinois bill is a victory that stands to be improved, particularly in the fight for equitable safeguards, but is also an important step forward in garnering legislative strength for domestic workers' rights. Overall, these findings demonstrate that domestic workers have been and must continue to be innovative in forging a path to obtaining stronger labor protections, effectively fighting for equity with other workers.

Appendices

Appendix 1

List of all interviewees:

Name	Organization	Category
Anna Jakubek	ARISE	Organizer
Shelly Ruzicka	ARISE	Organizer
Ai-Jen Poo	National Domestic Workers Alliance	Organizer
Analía Rodríguez	Latino Union of Chicago	Organizer
Anna Rubin	Jewish Council on Urban Affairs	Organizer
Maggie Zylinska	ARISE	Domestic Worker-Activist
Julia Hanson ⁴	Chicago Labor Center ⁵	Policy Advocate
Ruth Milkman	City University of New York	Academic
Carolina Sternberg	DePaul University	Academic
Nik Theodore	University of Illinois at Chicago	Academic
Barbara Flynn Currie	IL State Representative (House Majority Leader)	Lawmaker
Dale Righter	IL State Senator	Lawmaker
Jay Hoffman	IL State Representative	Lawmaker
Elizabeth (Lisa) Hernandez	IL State Representative (Bill Sponsor)	Lawmaker

⁴ Pseudonym given to protect privacy.

⁵ Pseudonym given to protect privacy.

Appendix 2

Interview Guide

1. How did you initially become interested in studying domestic workers and their labor rights or lack thereof?
2. Could you tell me when and how you first learned of the push to pass the IL Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights?
3. How do you think the devaluing of women's labor played into the opposition faced in this process? (explain opposition in IL being from legislators themselves and the distinction they draw between DWs and employees)
4. How do you respond to the notion that domestic work is not productive labor and therefore should not fall under formal labor protections?
5. Do you think the IL Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights effectively re-categorized domestic workers as a part of the productive labor force?
 - a. Probe: If yes, how do you think this re-categorization influenced the opposition this Bill faced?
6. Do you think it is dangerous or helpful for domestic workers to be a part of the larger labor movement (i.e. does that risk less attention to their need for special protections given the nature of their work)?
7. This Bill was pretty whittled down and turned into a very basic set of removal of exclusions, could you provide any insights into why certain aspects of this Bill would get carved out? (i.e. not mandating contracts, no paid time off, or other particular protections for domestic workers)
 - a. Do you think it is still worth it to go through legislative process?
 - b. Do you think it risks becoming 'symbolic policy' through compromise and negotiation?
8. This Bill was signed into law by former Governor Rauner, a Republican known for being tough on organized labor. Given what we know about his ideology and with politics being so divided, how do you think this Bill got passed under his administration?

Appendix 3

Extended Timeline**Table I (a). Illinois Domestic Workers Bill of Rights [EXTENDED] Timeline**

2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New York passes first Domestic Workers Bill of Rights
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January: National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) begins pilot survey of domestic workers in various cities in the U.S. ● Anna (Arise) travels to NY to participate in reviewing pilot/first draft of survey ● June: Workers begin giving surveys to domestic workers ● Sept: Arise attends first NDWA Congress. Arise and Latino Union talk about creating a coalition for Illinois Bill of Rights ● Illinois State Senator Silverstein introduces copy of NY bill in Illinois with no community input/involvement ● Bill passes through Labor Committee ● Bill dies on IL Senate floor
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chicago groups participate in NDWA Caring Across Generations campaign (Arise, Jobs with Justice, Latino Union, Women Employed, Shriver Center, others) ● September: groups start talking, and begin formation of coalition ● October: first meeting, at Arise (Bryn Mawr office) to initiate/form coalition (Arise, SEIU Healthcare, LU, Shriver, WE, Heartland Alliance; all staff, no workers yet) ● November: Coalition has call with Ai-jen Poo from NDWA to enlist support (Arise & LU are affiliates) ● NDWA shares New York and California bills. Coalition discusses what to be included in an IL bill ● December: Wendy Pollack from Shriver Center drafts first bill
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January 5th: full Saturday meeting at Arise reviewing draft bill, line by line (present: all staff, no workers yet--except Anna as former worker). Coalition decides not to include state workers for overtime in bill (as all state workers at the time excluded from overtime), and SEIU Healthcare leaves coalition. Bill language is finalized by the coalition. ● Jan 14th: Coalition (via Wendy Pollack at Shriver Center) send bill to Silverstein ● January 25th: Coalition has meeting with Illinois State Representative Lisa Hernandez to request her as lead sponsor ● Bill not introduced in House (secured Lisa Hernandez as sponsor; but didn't introduce in House) ● January 29th: Coalition (via Silverstein) introduces bill in IL Senate ● Coalition meet with legislators throughout the year
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SEIU Healthcare and Jobs with Justice join coalition ● AFIRE joins coalition ● Heartland Alliance creates coalition website ● Bill unable to get out of Senate Labor Committee ● Bill dies
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arise and LU lead coalition coordination ● New bill is drafted by Wendy Pollack, with full input and participation by partner organizations and workers including Arise, LU, Mujeres Latinas en Acción

- Coalition introduces new bill in House via Rep. Hernandez and Senate via Silverstein at same time; new bill is stripped down version.
- NDWA hires local coordinator to coordinate coalition
- Coalition struggling to get movement in the House
- May: Bill passes House on May 29th 2015 (75 Yes, 31 No, 1 not present)
- August: Senate Executive Committee (not Labor) holds hearing on Aug 19th. Arise member Maggie Zylinska testifies at hearing. Pass through Exec committee 10-5
- Sept 9th: Full Senate reading of the bill. Arise, LU, AFIRE fill buses with workers. Press conference in rotunda. Only 36 Senate Dems present, not veto-proof majority; worried about having the votes. Coalition, including workers decide not to call for vote. Senate vote delayed.
- Hard lobbying in Senate to pass

2016

- Continued hard lobbying in Senate
- May: Bill passes Senate on May 11, 2016 with 53 Yes votes
- July 13th: Downtown Chicago press conference at Thompson Center calling on Governor Rauner to sign the bill
- August 15th: Rauner signs bill into law
- Victory press conference

2017

- Bill takes effect in January of this year at request of Department of Labor
- Bill enforcement is low
- Coalition continues to meet, worker involvement and education is emphasized

Credit: Arise Chicago 2016; with additions and edits made by author

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