

THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL INSURANCE LEAVE ACT (THE FAMILY ACT-H.R.947/S.337)

BACKGROUND

- People across the country are working hard to make ends meet, yet **just 13 percent of the workforce has paid family leave**, and **less than 40 percent has personal medical leave** through an employer-provided program.ⁱ Low-wage workers have lower access to paid family leave than to higher wage earners, with only 5% of workers in the lowest quarter of earners, who are predominantly women and men of color, receiving paid family leave from an employer.ⁱⁱ
- While the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) has provided job-protected leave for some workers, its reach is limited: only 12% of U.S. private sector workers have access to FMLA.ⁱⁱⁱ Moreover, FMLA provides unpaid leave, and is only available to employees of larger organizations (50 or more employees) who have worked with the same employer for at least a year.
- Without paid leave to recover from serious illness or to care for family members facing serious illness, missing even a few days of work can have significant economic consequences for workers. Additionally, the lack of paid leave widens the gender and racial wage gaps, and makes it more difficult for workers to fulfil work and family responsibilities.

WHAT THE FAMILY ACT DOES

- Provides workers with up to **12 weeks of partial income when they need leave** for their own serious health condition, including pregnancy and childbirth recovery; the condition of a child, parent, spouse, or domestic partner; the birth or adoption of a child; or caregiving for military family members injured during their service.
- Allows all workers (full time and part time) to earn **66 percent** of their monthly wages, up to a capped amount. This would cover workers in all companies, no matter the size.
- The FAMILY Act would be funded by **small employee and employer payroll contributions** of two-tenths of one percent each, or about \$1.50 per week for the typical worker. It would be administered through a **new Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave** within the Social Security Administration. Payroll contributions would cover both insurance benefits and administrative costs.

PLEASE CO-SPONSOR THE FAMILY ACT

- The FAMILY Act provides crucial support for working women and families, particularly low wage workers who are disproportionately women and people of color.
- State-level paid family leave insurance programs in California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island are working well. Evaluations have indicated lower than expected program costs, positive public support,^{iv} and other favorable results.^v
- Paid family leave also enjoys broad support:

- Companies including YouTube, Vice Media, and Kinkos have already come out in favor of the FAMILY Act, as have business groups like the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce and the American Sustainable Business Council.^{vi}
- Most recently, the U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted a formal resolution in support.^{vii}
- In one 2016 survey, the majority of small business owners supported the creation of a family and medical leave insurance bill. With federal family and medical insurance leave, small businesses would be better equipped to can better compete with larger businesses, and retain employees.^{viii}

**Please support American workers by co-sponsoring the FAMILY Act,
joining the 27 Senators and 123 Members of the House of Representatives
who have already co-sponsored.**

ⁱ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014, September). Employee Benefits in the United States National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States. (2014, March). (Tables 16 and 32). Retrieved 28 September 2016, from <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2014/ebbl0055.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Forward Together (2016). Retrieved 13 February 2017 from <http://forwardtogether.org/resources/lifting-economic-policies-that-support-all-families/work-family-flexibility>.

ⁱⁱⁱ United States Department of Labor. (June 2015). Retrieved 10 February 2017 from <https://www.dol.gov/wb/paidleave/PDF/PaidLeave.pdf>.

^{iv} Press of Atlantic City. (2010, November 15). Paid Family Leave / Working well. Retrieved 6 March 2015, from http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/opinion/editorials/article_0d6ba980-3a1d-56f7-9101-258999b5d9d0.html; See also Houser, L., & White, K. (2012). Awareness of New Jersey's Family Leave Insurance Program is Low, Even as Public Support Remains High and Need Persists. Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey Center for Women and Work Publication. Retrieved 28 September 2016, from http://njtimetocare.com/sites/default/files/03_New%20Jersey%20Family%20Leave%20Insurance-%20A%20CWW%20Issue%20Brief.pdf

^v National Partnership for Women & Families. (2015, February). First Impressions: Comparing State Paid Family Leave Programs in Their First Years. Retrieved 28 September 2016, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/first-impressions-comparing-state-paid-family-leave-programs-in-their-first-years.pdf>

^{vi} Sneed, T. Paid Family Leave is Primed for a National Debate. (2015, March 23). U.S. News and World Reports. Retrieved 28 September 2016, from <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2015/03/23/paid-family-leave-is-primed-for-a-national-debate>.

^{vii} U.S. Conference of Mayors Resolution Supporting National Paid Family Leave. (2016). Retrieved 28 September 2016, from http://usmayors.org/resolutions/84th_Conference/proposedcommittee-review.asp?committee=Metro%20Economies.

^{viii} Main Street Alliance. (2017, February). New Report: Small Business Owners Support Paid Family Leave, FAMILY Act. Retrieved 13 February 2017 from http://www.mainstreetalliance.org/small_business_owners_support_family_act