

Dear

I am a member of United Methodist Women, a national faith-based women's organization working to address the rights and needs of women, youth and children. I urge you to sign on to the FAMILY Act (H.R. 1185/S. 463), a bi-partisan bill which will provide family and medical leave for all. [congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1185/all-info?r=6]

This bill supports maternal and child health, a sound economy and living wages for all. Paid leave will allow people to spend time with newborns and to care for themselves or loved ones when they are injured or ill. Paid leave boosts productivity, reducing employee turnover and increasing consumer spending. It ensures coverage no matter where one lives or works.

The FAMILY Act will pool small contributions from employers and employees to create a fund that allows people to draw a portion of their wages when they need to take leave. Self-employed people can pay into the fund as well. This model has already proved successful for employees and business owners alike in California, New Jersey, Rhode Island and New York.

We appreciate that the FAMILY Act goes beyond coverage for parents of a new child. Limiting the coverage would exclude 75 percent of caregivers--including many parents whose children may experience serious illness or injury. Proposals that draw from social security or unemployment insurance would undermine existing programs, forcing people to take a cut in retirement or cutting resources to laid-off workers. This is why I support the creation of a separate social insurance fund to cover leave time.

As you may know, only 17 percent of the U.S. workforce has access to employer-sponsored paid family leave. Millions of people in this country forego medical treatment or return to the job before they've had a chance to heal due to a lack of paid leave. Nearly one in four mothers of new babies go back to work within two weeks of giving birth. That makes recovery from birth more physically painful and emotionally traumatic and puts women at risk of life-threatening complications. Taking leave to care for loved ones can also deplete savings and lead to job loss, undermining family incomes and women's long-term economic stability.

That is why I urge you to sign on to the FAMILY Act. I would like to know your position on this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



United
Methodist
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION