



Overview of Paid Family Leave in the United States

- Paid leave will allow people, regardless of gender, to cherish the first months of a child's life and enrich the last months of a beloved parent's; to heal and thrive after their own injury or illness; and to spur the recovery or ease the suffering of a loved one.
- Paid leave boosts productivity, reduces employee turnover and increases consumer spending, which leads to a healthy and competitive economy. It ensures coverage no matter where you live or work.
- Paid leave is critical to a living wage, ensuring no one earns \$0 for having a baby, an illness or a parent with cancer.
- Paid leave is critical for an effective health care system, so people can take the time they need for treatment.
- The question is not if, but when the United States will join the rest of the world in making it possible for people to provide for and care for their loved ones.

Support the **FAMILY Act**¹

- 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. The FAMILY Act incorporates the social insurance fund model that has already proved successful for employees and business owners alike in four states—California, New Jersey, Rhode Island and New York. Three more states—Washington, Massachusetts and the District of Columbia—will join them soon, and more wins are on the horizon.
- Paid leave proposals that cover only parents of a new child 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.

¹ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1185/all-info?r=6>

State of Paid Leave in the United States

- 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.
- Most families with male parents take a financial hit if men take paternity leave to bond with a baby.
- 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.
- Many same-sex couples can't afford to be there for each other in sickness and in health.
- Only 17 percent of the U.S. workforce has access to employer-sponsored paid family leave.
- Americans in the highest income quartile are three and a half times more likely to have access to paid family leave than those in the lowest income quartile.
- Ninety-two percent of companies in a state with a paid family leave fund reported that it had a positive effect or no negative effect on profitability.
- Family leave is a maternal and child health issue. Inadequate leave reduces the frequency and duration of breastfeeding. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists estimated that "enabling optimal breastfeeding [through paid leave] would prevent 2,619 maternal deaths and 721 fetal deaths annually in the United States."

According to a recent public opinion [study](#):²

- Eight-four percent of voters, including 74 percent of Republicans and 94 percent of Democrats, support a comprehensive national paid family and medical leave policy that covers all people who work.
- Sixty-six percent of voters said they would face serious hardship if they had to take up to a few months of unpaid leave for family or medical reasons.
- Eighty-one percent said it was important that a 2018 candidate for Congress supported a national paid leave policy that allows people who work to have a meaningful portion of their wages during leave.

Contact your members of Congress and urge them to sign on the FAMILY Act:
www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/leave

² <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/voters-views-on-paid-family-medical-leave-survey-findings-august-2018.pdf>