

SUPPORT FOR PAID FAMILY LEAVE GROWS

At some point, nearly everyone needs time to recover from a serious illness or care for a sick loved one or new child. But the majority of working people in the United States cannot take the leave they need without risking their jobs or economic security. **A national Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FMLI) program would allow people to receive a portion of their wages when they need time for family or medical reasons** – resulting in significant benefits for their families, businesses and our economy.

- Only [12 percent](#) of the U.S. workers have access to paid family leave through their employers. That means millions of workers who develop serious health conditions, have seriously ill family members or become parents are forced to choose between what is best for them and their families and income they need to cover basic expenses.
- The Family and Medical Leave Act – the only federal law designed to help working people meet the dual demands of job and family – [leaves out 40 percent of the workforce](#) and guarantees only unpaid leave, which millions cannot afford to take.

FAMILIES IN THREE STATES ARE BENEFITING FROM PAID FAMILY LEAVE POLICIES

CALIFORNIA

- In 2002, California became the first state to pass a Paid Family Leave program. The program has been enormously successfully, benefitting more than 1.6 million Californians since implementation.
- Research shows that California’s paid leave program has improved worker retention and increased productivity, profitability and morale. More than [9 in 10 employers](#) report no costs – or cost-savings – from the program.
- Paid leave means mothers like [Mary Ignatius](#) could spend the time her baby needed for treatment of a birth defect. “It was such a relief,” Mary said. “I didn’t have to worry about anything but him.”

NEW JERSEY

- Since 2009, New Jersey’s law has allowed more than 160,000 workers to take paid family leave, the vast majority of who used it to care for new babies.
- The [program has had no negative impact on businesses](#), many employers have reported increased employee morale as a result, and more than 3 in 4 [New Jerseyans support the law](#).
- The law has helped workers like [Jason Butkowski](#), who took paid leave to stay home with his twins, born prematurely, as their immune systems recovered until they were able to go to child care.

RHODE ISLAND

- In 2013, [Rhode Island](#) became the third state to adopt a family leave insurance program, breaking ground by protecting the jobs of all workers who need to take time to care for family members.
- Since the law went into effect in 2014, more than 1,000 workers have benefited from paid leave. Moms like [Tammy Russo](#), whose family experienced tremendous emotional and financial stress while her son was undergoing multiple surgeries, will now be able to afford to take time with their kids when they’re in need.

MANY MORE STATES ARE CONSIDERING LEGISLATION

- In [Washington State](#), a paid leave program awaits funding, and [New York State](#) is the next state likely to pass a family leave insurance program.
- Vermont, Connecticut and New Hampshire have [each approved a task force](#) to explore the issue. And several other states, including Colorado, Hawaii, Nebraska and Wisconsin are laying the groundwork for similar legislation.
- The [FAMILY Act](#), introduced in 2013, would create a national insurance fund allowing people to receive a portion of their pay when they need time away. It currently has nearly 90 cosponsors in Congress.