

6/18/2025

Honorable Josh Shapiro  
Governor of Pennsylvania  
508 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Shapiro:

As organizations committed to achieving gender equality, we are writing to thank you for supporting working families and championing women in Pennsylvania. As part of your agenda, we are grateful to count you as a supporter of paid family and medical leave and we urge you to prioritize passage of the bipartisan Family Care Act, which would create a statewide paid family and medical leave program in Pennsylvania.

The evidence is clear. A state paid leave program will support mothers, all parents and caregivers, improve birth outcomes, help stabilize the workforce, and boost the capacity of Pennsylvania's businesses to recruit and retain talent and increase productivity and profitability. This is why [recent polling shows](#) 81 percent of Pennsylvania voters, including 67 percent of GOP voters, support the establishment of a statewide paid family and medical leave program.

Access to paid leave can improve mothers' mental and physical health by reducing stress and increasing the likelihood of obtaining healthcare following the birth of their baby. As a result, mothers who have access to paid leave are more prepared to return to their jobs and remain attached to the workforce after having a baby. Paid leave also promotes fathers' engagement in their children's lives; supports the ability of spouses to return to work; and makes caregivers for loved ones more likely to rejoin the workforce. Paid leave is also critically important for survivors of domestic violence and assault – the vast majority of whom are women. And paid medical leave and family caregiving leave supports all workers' health, well-being, and financial stability when serious acute and chronic issues emerge.

Paid leave is not only an economic and gender equity priority – it is also a commitment to the values of family and freedom, especially at a time when reproductive freedom is under attack. Most states and elected officials that have passed paid leave have also secured reproductive rights because access to paid leave is part of reproductive freedom by allowing people to choose freely whether and when to become a parent or grow a family.

In the United States, there are currently 14 statewide paid leave programs, which includes Pennsylvania's neighboring mid-Atlantic states of New Jersey, New York, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Business owners in states with existing paid leave programs report that access to paid leave has had a direct positive effect on their businesses. To remain economically competitive in the region by recruiting and retaining young families, Pennsylvania should do the same.

Approximately 90,000 private employers in Pennsylvania offer some level of paid family and medical leave benefits to their workforce. Yet 71% of all private companies, employing about 4 million Pennsylvania employees, are not offering paid family and medical leave benefits at all. Enacting a state-based paid family and medical leave program will improve the business conditions for most companies that cannot afford these benefits, boosting the productivity of each company.

Impossible choices between work and family are forcing employees, especially women (nearly half of Pennsylvania's labor force), out of their jobs. The resulting loss of income places many families in dire financial situations and contributes to the gender pay gap. Access to a paid leave program would allow talented employees to keep their jobs while caring for their families or their own health, resulting in better financial stability for families and higher rates of employee retention for employers. Furthermore, evidence has shown that those who had access to paid leave are more likely to earn raises and promotions following leave. Survey data also shows that workers who are considering moving states for a job prefer to move to a state with a paid leave program.

The implementation of a statewide paid family and medical leave program is vital to the future of Pennsylvania's economic growth relative to its neighboring states and to the economic vitality of the region. There is not a single piece of bipartisan legislation that is being considered at the moment in Harrisburg that would have more of a positive impact on Pennsylvania's working families and economy than the Family Care Act. You have a tremendous opportunity to lead Pennsylvania's economy into the future and show the rest of the country that both Democrats and Republicans can work together to get big things done for working families.

We strongly urge you to continue your support for Pennsylvania's businesses, workforce, and economic competitiveness – and your commitment to women – by urging the legislature to pass a statewide paid family and medical leave program that benefits both employees and businesses across the Commonwealth. Thank you.

Signed,

9 to 5 National Association of Working Women

A Better Balance

American Association of University Women

The American Heart Association

Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy

Care in Action

Caring Across Generations

Center for Economic and Policy Research

Center for Law and Social Policy

Chamber of Mothers

COLAGE

CommunicationFIRST

Equal Rights Advocates

Family Caregiver Alliance, National Center on Caregiving

Family Values @ Work

Family Values @ Work Action

Feminist Generation

Girls for Gender Equity

Institute for Women's Policy Research

Justice + Joy National Collaborative

Legal Momentum

Main Street Alliance

Mental Health Partnerships

Moms First

MomsRising

National Alliance for Caregiving

National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, Black Women's Roundtable

National Council of Jewish Women

National Domestic Workers Alliance

National Employment Law Project

National Organization for Women

National Partnership for Women & Families Action

National Women's Law Center Action

Oxfam America

Paid Leave for All Action

PERSIST

Reproductive Freedom for All (formerly NARAL Pro-Choice America)

Restaurant Opportunities Centers United

Small Business Majority

Supermajority

Women's March

WorkLife Law

Zero to Three