

June 17, 2026

Governor Josh Shapiro
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Shapiro and Lieutenant Governor Davis,

The undersigned organizations write to thank you for your continued efforts and support for paid family and medical leave in Pennsylvania and urge you to work with the legislature to pass a comprehensive and sustainable paid family and medical leave program. This would be an extraordinary victory that would support the economic security of millions of families in the Commonwealth and demonstrate the power of bipartisan efforts to better the lives of workers and their families.

Paid leave would leave millions of Pennsylvania workers finally able to afford time off to care for their families or themselves.

Pennsylvania families are facing an affordability crisis, struggling to make ends meet as the costs of essentials, such as housing, health care, and groceries, rise faster than earnings.¹ To cover 12 weeks of basic expenses, including rent and utilities, groceries, health care, transportation, and personal care items, a typical worker in America would need \$7,588.² While some workers may be able to rely on personal savings while on unpaid leave, many adult workers do not have enough saved to cover three months of expenses.³ Without paid family and medical leave, millions of workers in Pennsylvania must make the difficult choice to take on debt, cut back on necessities, take less leave than they need, or not take any leave at all.⁴

Most working people in the United States do not have paid family leave through their jobs, including about 62 percent — about four million workers — in Pennsylvania.⁵ Each year,

¹ Coan, T. (2026, May 20). *Families Can't Afford to Go Without Paid Leave*. Retrieved 11 June 2026 from the National Partnership for Women & Families website: <https://nationalpartnership.org/families-cant-afford-to-go-without-paid-leave/>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.; National Partnership for Women & Families. (2026, February). *Paid Leave Means a Stronger Pennsylvania*. Retrieved 11 June 2026, from <https://nationalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/paid-leave-means-a-stronger-pennsylvania.pdf>

⁵ National Partnership for Women & Families. (2026, February). *Paid Leave Means a Stronger Pennsylvania*. Retrieved 11 June 2026, from <https://nationalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/paid-leave-means-a-stronger-pennsylvania.pdf>

Pennsylvanians are unable to take 462,000 leaves that they need and lose \$2 billion in wages due to unpaid or partially paid leave, including \$1.2 billion lost by women.⁶

Paid leave in Pennsylvania would mean workers, especially women, could stay in their jobs and continue to provide for their families.

The impossible choice between work and family is forcing employees out of their jobs. This is especially true for women, who are nearly half of Pennsylvania's labor force.⁷ Loss of their income can be devastating for families in the Commonwealth. In Pennsylvania, 81 percent of Black mothers, 61 percent of Latina mothers, 49 percent of white mothers, and 40 percent of AAPI mothers are key family breadwinners.⁸ State-level data is limited, but nationally, 64 percent of Native American mothers are breadwinners.⁹ Mothers who take paid leave are more likely than those who take unpaid or no leave to return to their jobs and remain attached to the workforce.¹⁰

If women in Pennsylvania participated in the labor force at the same rate as women in countries with paid leave, there would be an estimated 119,000 additional workers in the state and \$4.8 billion more wages earned statewide annually.¹¹

Passing paid leave in Pennsylvania would thrust the Commonwealth into the national spotlight as an example of successful bipartisan efforts to support workers and address the affordability crisis.

Earlier this year, Virginia became the 15th state, including the District of Columbia, to enact a state paid leave program. Pennsylvania has a historic opportunity to be the first truly purple state to guarantee every worker access to paid family and medical leave and show the rest of the country that bipartisan work can get things done for working families. As recent polling shows, Pennsylvanians are calling for Harrisburg to do just that with an overwhelming 81 percent of Pennsylvania voters, including 67 percent of GOP voters, supporting the establishment of a statewide paid family and medical leave program.¹²

We strongly urge you to continue your fight for Pennsylvania's working families by working with the legislature to pass a sustainable paid family and medical leave program.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ National Partnership for Women & Families. (2025, May). *Paid Leave is Good for Business*. Retrieved 11 June 2026, from <https://nationalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/paid-leave-good-for-business.pdf>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² ChildrenFirst. (2025, May 8). *PA Voters Show Strong Support for Paid Family Leave in PA*. Retrieved 12 June 2026, from <https://www.childrenfirstpa.org/report/pa-voters-show-strong-support-for-paid-family-leave-in-pa/>

Signed,

A Better Balance

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

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 (CLASP)

Center for Parental Leave Leadership

Chamber of Mothers

Equal Rights Advocates

Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice

Family Values @ Work

Family Values @ Work Action

Feminist Majority

Gender Equality Law Center, Inc.

Institute for Women's Policy Research

Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)

Legal Momentum, the Women's Legal Defense & Education Fund

Little Lobbyists

Main Street Alliance

Moms First

MomsRising

Mother Forward

National Alliance for Caregiving

National Center for LGBTQ Rights

National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers

National Council of Jewish Women

National Domestic Workers Alliance

National Organization for Women

National Women's Law Center Action Fund

Oxfam America

Paid Leave for All

Paid Leave for All Action

Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)

Reproductive Freedom for All

Small Business Majority

SPAN Parent Advocacy Network

The National Partnership for Women & Families

The National Partnership for Women & Families Action Fund

Women Employed

YWCA USA