

March 20, 2020

Dear Members of Congress:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to co-sponsor and advocate for swift passage of the PAID Leave Act (Providing Americans Insured Days of Leave Act), introduced by U.S. Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT).

The spread of COVID-19 has highlighted the health and economic consequences faced by working people when they lack access to paid sick days and paid family and medical leave. In the United States, more than 32 million workers lack access to paid sick days, and for low-income workers it's even worse. While 93 percent of the highest-wage workers have access to paid sick days, only 30 percent of the lowest wage workers do. Workers in jobs that require frequent contact with the public, including those in food preparation and service, personal home care, and child care, are among the least likely to have paid sick days and the most likely to be unable to afford to take unpaid time away from work. Furthermore, only 19 percent of the workforce has access to longer-term paid family leave through their employer, and only 40 percent has access to paid medical leave through their employer.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have recommended that individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 self-quarantine for 14 days. Individuals may also need to stay home longer if they are diagnosed with COVID-19, or if their workplace or family member's school or place of care is closed for longer than 14 days. But for people without access to paid sick days and paid family and medical leave, this is a near impossibility. Millions of workers face the devastating decision between risking their own health (and that of their families and communities) or risking the loss of a paycheck or job. No one should face this choice, let alone during an unprecedented public health emergency.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (H.R. 6201) included historic provisions requiring some employers to provide limited paid sick days and paid leave for certain caregiving purposes during the current COVID-19 crisis. However, working families need much more. The limited scope of these provisions, particularly the carve-out for workers at businesses with 500 or more employees, the hardship exemption eligibility for businesses with fewer than 50 employees, the narrow reasons for taking leave and the absence of any permanent paid sick time or paid leave provisions to protect workers in the years to come will leave too many working people behind.

The PAID Leave Act closes these loopholes and addresses these urgent needs. It builds off of the Healthy Families Act and the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act to ensure that working people have access to 14 days of paid sick leave and 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave for use during the COVID-19 outbreak or any future public health emergency. It provides paid time for those who may have been exposed to the virus to self-quarantine; for those who contract the disease to heal, seek treatment and self-isolate; , and for those with affected loved ones to care for them. It also covers lost income in the event of workplace, school, or place of care closings.

This bill also recognizes that people need time off from work when there isn't a public health emergency, and provides up to seven earned paid sick and safe days annually to recover from short-term illnesses, access preventive care, care for a sick loved one, or seek assistance related to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. It also creates a permanent paid family and medical leave insurance system to welcome a new child, care for loved ones, and address serious personal medical issues. Notably, having these essential policies in place before a future public health emergency can help workers, workplaces and communities respond more effectively and equitably for the good of everyone.

We urge all members of Congress to co-sponsor this bill and advocate for its swift passage. Our society is only as healthy as its most vulnerable members. Now more than ever, we must recognize that we all have a stake in ensuring that working people have access to paid sick and safe days and paid family and medical leave.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days
A Better Balance
AFSCME 65
Albuquerque SURJ
All-Options
Alliance for Retired Americans
Allied Progress
Amara Legal Center
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP)
American Psychiatric Association Women's Caucus
American Public Health Association
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
AnitaB.org
Arizona Center for Economic Progress
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
Asian Real Estate Association of America (AREAA)
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Associations of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Black and Pink
Black Women's Roundtable
Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles
California Employment Lawyers Association
Caring Across Generations
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities
Center for American Progress
Center for Economic and Policy Research
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research
Center for Popular Democracy
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Child and Family Policy Center
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Defense Fund - New York
Chinese American Planning Council
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Coalition on Human Needs
Collaborative for Health Equity Cook County
Connecticut Voices for Children
Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF)
Demos
Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project
Economic Opportunity Institute
Economic Policy Institute
Equality California
Equality North Carolina
Every Child Matters
Family Equality
Family Forward Oregon
First Focus Campaign for Children
First Focus on Children
Forward Together Action
Futures Without Violence
Gender Justice
Global Policy Solutions
GLSEN
Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition
Hawai'i Children's Action Network
Health & Medicine Policy Research Group
HealthxDesign
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights
Human Impact Partners
In the Public Interest
Indivisible
Iowa Policy Project
ISALAH - MN
Jewish Women International
Justice for Migrant Women
Justice in Aging
Labor Project for Working Families
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Maine Center for Economic Policy
Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence
Maine Women's Lobby Education Fund
March of Dimes
Michigan League for Public Policy

Midwives Association of Washington State
MomsRising
Mothering Justice
Movement Advancement Project
NAACP
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of Social Workers Connecticut Chapter
National Center for Law and Economic Justice
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment
(National PLACE)
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (National
CAPACD)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Domestic Violence Hotline
National Employment Law Project
National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH)
National Lawyers Guild Labor and Employment Committee
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
National Women's Law Center
National Workrights Institute
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
NYS Public Employees Federation
Oasis Legal Services
Oxfam America
Paid Leave for All
Paid Leave for the United States (PL+US)
People's Action
Physicians for Social Responsibility, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
Poder Latinx
Positive Women's Network-USA
Promundo-US
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Citizen
Public Health
ReproJobs
RESULTS
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Silver State Equality-Nevada
Tash

The Forum for Youth Investment
The Fund for Community Reparations for Autistic People of Color's Interdependence,
Survival, and Empowerment
The Ohio Women's Public Policy Network
TIME'S UP Now
Transport Workers Union
Trust for America's Health
UCLA
UFCW Local 1189
Ujima Inc: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
UnidosUS
Union for Reform Judaism
United for Respect
Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
We All Rise
We Testify
West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy
William E. Morris Institute for Justice
Women and Girls Foundation of Southwest PA
Women Employed
Women's Law Project
Women's Rights and Empowerment Network
Working Partnerships USA