

In Opposition to a Federal Paid Leave Entitlement Program

October 1, 2021

Dear President Biden, Senators, and Members of Congress,

Everyone wants workers to be able to take time off from work when they need it. Fortunately, increasingly employers are offering paid leave benefits to employees, including hourly workers. This is great news, and a trend that we want to continue.

However, creating a one-size-fits-all government entitlement program would be the wrong way to expand access to paid leave benefits, because they:

- **Are Unfair to Low-Income Workers:** Paid leave entitlement programs tend to benefit those with higher incomes and burden those with lower incomes. Research has found this to be the case with paid leave programs enacted in [California](#), [New Jersey](#), [Rhode Island](#), [Canada](#), [Norway](#), [the United Kingdom](#), [Sweden](#), [Iceland](#), and [Belgium](#). This isn't fair.
- **Undermine Existing Benefit Programs:** A one-size-fits-all federal benefit will discourage companies from offering their own paid leave benefits. Many employees would end up with less flexibility and worse paid leave benefits as a result.
- **Subsidize Big Businesses That Don't Need Help:** The proposed federal program would do more to benefit big companies that already provide paid family leave than it would to help low-income workers who lack paid family leave.
- **Undermine Opportunities for Women:** Research also shows that women's advancement suffers under government paid leave regimes: A [National Bureau of Economic Research study](#) of California's paid leave entitlement found that it decreased women's employment by 7% and wages by 8%; countries with more generous government paid leave programs have [larger wage gaps](#), and women are [less likely to advance into leadership roles](#).
- **Reduce Workers' Income:** If a new payroll tax or corporate tax hike is used to fund a paid leave entitlement, all workers would have less money in every paycheck. This would be especially hard on low-income workers at a time when inflation is already eating away at people's income.

There are better ways to support workers when they need time off from work without upending the existing employment arrangement of every single working American.

We the undersigned, representing millions of Americans, oppose a federal paid leave entitlement program because we want to preserve opportunity, flexibility, and fairness.

Sincerely,

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