

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

July 10, 2017

President Donald J. Trump  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our support for providing American workers across this country with 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave that is sustainable, affordable, and inclusive. We appreciate your interest in paid leave; however we are concerned that the proposal included in your 2018 budget request is inadequate because it only provides six weeks of paid leave for limited circumstances and without a solid funding mechanism.

Too many American workers are not paid enough to make ends meet. Providing American workers with adequate paid leave is an economic issue for families. Working families lose an estimated \$20.6 billion in wages each year due to a lack of access to paid family and medical leave. Both women and men need to be able to take time off work to participate in the care of their children, in the care of seriously ill family members, and to address their own serious health conditions. Yet, only 14 percent of U.S. workers have paid family leave through their employer and nearly 25 percent of new mothers must return to work within two weeks of giving birth.

Although your proposal recognizes the economic problem, it falls far short of what most working Americans need. In reality, more than three-quarters of people who take family or medical leave do so to care for themselves or a sick family member. Yet, your proposal limits paid leave to birth or adoption of a child. Family caregiving needs will only increase as the population and workforce ages and the millions of people caring for both their elderly family members and their own children increases. Moreover, the six week duration offered in your plan is inconsistent with the 12-week national standard established over twenty-four years ago for family and medical leave.

We are also concerned that you propose to administer your paid leave program through the unemployment insurance program, which would place this program at further financial risk. The state unemployment insurance program is already severely underfunded, with average benefits of \$333 replacing only one-third of earnings. Stretching already inadequate unemployment insurance benefits fails to offer the stability and consistency needed by working families.

We need a solution that we know works for workers and works for businesses. Research from states where paid leave laws are in effect, including California, New Jersey and Rhode Island, shows that implementing the policy has had positive effects on recruitment, retention, productivity and overall performance. In California, the vast majority of employers report a positive impact on employee productivity, profitability, and performance. In New Jersey, three out of four workers view the program favorably. In Rhode Island, where business supporters were critical to the passage of the law, research among employees and employers show the

program is working well. California, New Jersey and Rhode Island all cover personal medical leave through longstanding temporary disability insurance programs and paid family leave for family caregiving in addition to leave for the birth or adoption of a child. Last year, New York legislators overwhelmingly passed a new paid leave plan, which will take effect in 2018 and cover 12 weeks of paid leave when fully phased in by 2021. Nearly eighty percent of New Yorkers supported the proposal. Employees who work hard deserve our support to get through tough periods in their lives. Helping them keep their jobs and hang on to their paychecks will boost our economy.

That is why we urge you to support The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act, a national insurance program, which would provide workers much-needed income when using family and medical leave. Eligible employees could take up to 12 weeks away from their jobs with partial wage replacement to take care of themselves or a family member in a one-year period. Employees could take paid leave provided under this new law for the same reasons that they can take the unpaid leave provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) today—to address their own serious health issue, including pregnancy or childbirth; to deal with the serious health issue of a parent, spouse, domestic partner or child; to care for a new child; and/or for particular military caregiving and leave purposes. Given that the population aged 65 and older is expected to double over the next few decades and the number of people with chronic conditions is expected to reach nearly 160 million by 2020, many of these individuals will at some point require family care, and for older workers still in the workforce, many will need time off at some point to address serious health conditions. The FAMILY Act is the solution for those workers.

It is critical we provide much-needed financial security to workers and their families and certainty for businesses. The FAMILY Act will provide the comprehensive benefits workers need to care for themselves and their families. We urge you to work with us to support a truly comprehensive solution for working Americans.

Sincerely,



Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress



Stacey Plaskett  
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress




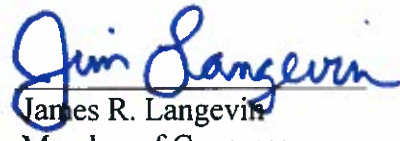
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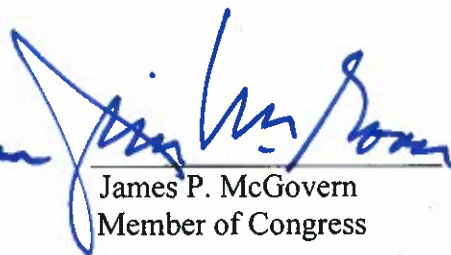
  
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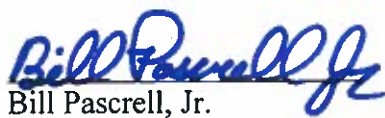
  
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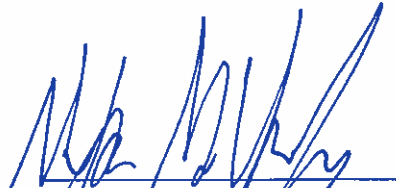
  
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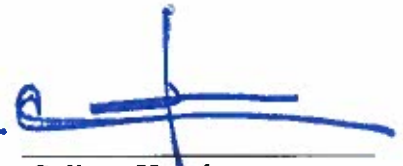
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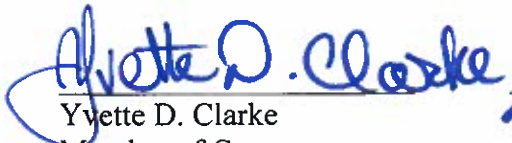
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Michelle Lujan Grisham  
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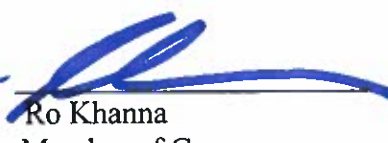
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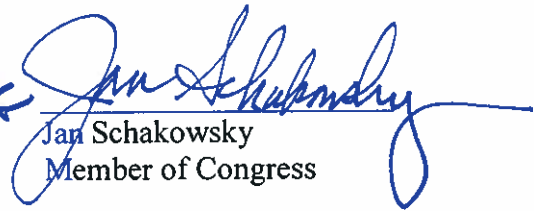
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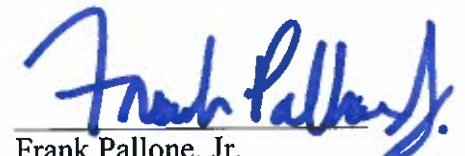
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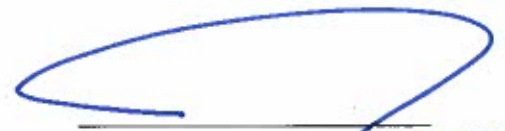
  
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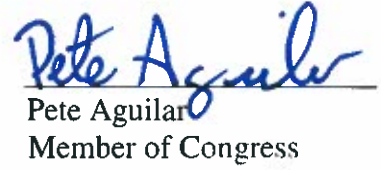
  
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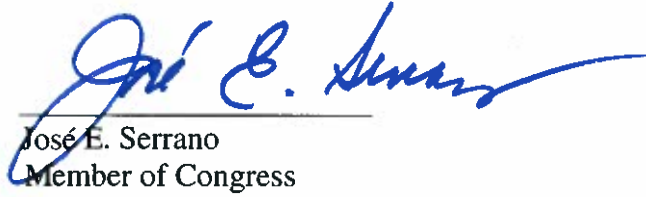
  
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