

# Paid Leave Means A Stronger D.C.

JANUARY 2018

**Washington, D.C., was the first city to enact a paid family and medical leave insurance program**, and it's the first program built without the infrastructure of an existing temporary disability insurance program. Passed in 2017, the program takes effect in 2020 and will provide eight weeks of paid parental leave, six weeks of paid family leave and two weeks of paid medical leave. The program is built on lessons learned from older state programs.<sup>1</sup>

**District residents are caught between their work and family responsibilities.**

People  
in the  
District both  
work and  
provide care

- ▶ In 78 percent of all D.C. households with children – more than 89,000 homes – all parents have paying jobs.<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Women's wages support their households. In the District, 88 percent of Black mothers and 49 percent of white mothers are key family breadwinners.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Women make up more than half of D.C.'s labor force (52 percent) and more than one-third of its business owners (35 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Across the country, many men want to play a larger role in caring for their children,<sup>5</sup> but unsupportive policies and stigma hold them back.<sup>6</sup>

**Paid leave means not having to choose between job and family.**

**District families are facing family and medical care needs.**

- ▶ Nearly one in six workers is age 55 and older.<sup>7</sup>
- ▶ Older workers are more likely to experience serious medical conditions that require care.<sup>8</sup>
- ▶ One person dies every day from a drug overdose in the District of Columbia.<sup>9</sup>

**Paid leave means older adults and working people of all ages can get the support they need to receive and provide critical care.**

D.C.'s  
caregiving  
needs are  
significant, and  
growing

**The District will soon see the benefits of paid leave for workers, families and businesses.**

**D.C.'s paid leave program will soon help thousands**

- ▶ Paid leave helps improve health outcomes and helps working people remain economically secure and stay connected to their jobs.
- ▶ Businesses' employee retention can also improve significantly with paid leave, helping to strengthen bottom lines.
- ▶ State programs like the District's are used as intended by workers without overburdening employers.<sup>10</sup>

**Paid leave means people can care for their families or health without jeopardizing their economic security, reducing turnover for employers and boosting the economy.**

**D.C. will soon add to the growing body of evidence that paid leave programs work – and that there is a common sense, tested approach that works for families, businesses and economies.**

But, people's access to paid leave shouldn't depend on where they live or work or what job they hold. A paid leave policy for the nation would build on state models. It would:

- ▶ Be cost-effective for workers, employers and the government;
- ▶ Cover all working people, apply equally to men and women and reflect a modern definition of family;
- ▶ Include the well-established reasons people need family and medical leave;
- ▶ Provide at least 12 weeks of leave and replace a substantial share of workers' usual wages; and
- ▶ Protect workers against adverse consequences for taking leave.

**A real national paid leave plan – the FAMILY Act – is the solution**

The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act is the only federal proposal that meets these criteria. **The FAMILY Act means a stronger economy, healthier families and businesses, and greater workplace equality for women.**

**For more on the FAMILY Act, visit [NationalPartnership.org/theFAMILYAct](https://NationalPartnership.org/theFAMILYAct).**

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- 1 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2017, July). *State Paid Family Leave Insurance Laws*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/state-paid-family-leave-laws.pdf>
- 2 U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2016, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_16\\_1YR\\_DP03&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_1YR_DP03&prodType=table)
- 3 Anderson, J. (2016, September 8). *Breadwinner Mothers by Race/Ethnicity and State*. Institute for Women's Policy Research Publication. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <https://iwpr.org/publications/breadwinner-mothers-by-raceethnicity-and-state/>; "Key breadwinner" means a single mother who heads a household or a married mother who contributes 40 percent or more of the couple's joint earnings. Nationally, 81 percent of Black mothers are key breadwinners; 67 percent of Native American mothers are key breadwinners; 60 percent of mothers identifying as multiracial or "other" race are key breadwinners; 53 percent of Latina mothers are key breadwinners; 50 percent of white mothers are key breadwinners; and 44 percent of Asian mothers are key breadwinners.
- 4 See note 2; Institute of Women's Policy Research. (2018). *Status of Women in the States*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <https://statusofwomendata.org/state-data/>
- 5 Heilman, B., et al. (2016). *State of America's Fathers*. MenCare Advocacy Publication. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from [https://men-care.org/soaf/download/PRO16001\\_Americas\\_Father\\_web.pdf](https://men-care.org/soaf/download/PRO16001_Americas_Father_web.pdf); see also, Livingston, G. (2018, January 8). *Most dads say they spend too little time with their children; about a quarter live apart from them*. Pew Research Center Publication. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/08/most-dads-say-they-spend-too-little-time-with-their-children-about-a-quarter-live-apart-from-them/>
- 6 U.S. Department of Labor. (2015, September 4). *The Cost of Doing Nothing: The Price We All Pay Without Paid Leave Policies to Support America's 21st Century Working Families*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <https://www.dol.gov/featured/paidleave/cost-of-doing-nothing-report.pdf>
- 7 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). *Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and intermediate age, 2016 annual averages*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <https://www.bls.gov/lau/ex14tables.htm> (Unpublished calculation by the National Partnership for Women & Families)
- 8 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2017, June). *Our Aging, Caring Nation: Why a U.S. Paid Leave Plan Must Provide More Than Time to Care for New Children*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/caREGIVINGREPORT>
- 9 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2017, December 19). *Drug Overdose Death Data, Number and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by state, US 2016*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html>
- 10 National Partnership for Women & Families. (2016, June). *Paid Leave Works in California, New Jersey and Rhode Island*. Retrieved 24 January 2018, from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/paid-leave-works-in-california-new-jersey-and-rhode-island.pdf>

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at [NationalPartnership.org](http://NationalPartnership.org).

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