

Three in four people (76 percent) surveyed reported that they favor expanding the FMLA to offer paid leave. In 2009, legislatures in more than a half dozen states responded to this need by considering paid family and medical leave legislation.

Arizona

Representatives Daniel Patterson and Barbara McGuire, along with four of their colleagues, introduced paid leave legislation to be considered by the State of Arizona's House of Representatives in its 2009 session. The bill, HB 2598, would provide up to five weeks of paid leave to be used to care for a newborn or newly-adopted child, to care for a family member with a serious health condition, or to recover from a serious health condition. Workers would be eligible to receive \$250 per week; each year the benefit level would be adjusted to account for inflation.

For more information about the legislation, visit www.azleg.state.az.us.

Massachusetts

Senator Karen Spilka, along with three colleagues, introduced SB 71, which would establish a state paid family and medical leave system. The legislation would create a trust fund to be used for wage replacement when workers need to take time away from work for the purposes allowed under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act: to care for a newborn or newly adopted family member, to recover from a serious illness, or to care for a family member with a serious illness. Workers would be eligible for 80% of their wages or salary, up to a maximum of \$750 per week, for up to 12 weeks; the benefit cap would be adjusted for inflation annually. The legislation also would create a council to address critical work-family issues in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

For more information about the legislation, visit www.mass.gov/legis.

Missouri

Representative Beth Low, along with three colleagues, introduced HB 407, which would require larger businesses to provide four weeks of paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child.

For more information about the legislation, visit www.house.mo.gov.

New Hampshire

Representative Mary Gile introduced HB 661, which would establish a state family leave insurance system for the State of New Hampshire. The system would ensure that workers can take up to six weeks of paid leave to care for a newborn or newly placed child, or to care for a family member with a serious health condition, including a wounded service member. Workers would receive \$250 per week. The legislation is supported by a coalition led by the New Hampshire Women's Lobby.

For more information about the advocacy campaign, visit the New Hampshire Women's Lobby website at www.nhwomenslobby.org.

New York

The New York State Paid Family Leave Coalition and the Center for Working Families is partnering with legislators to advance 2009 paid family leave legislation. The legislation (A 8742 and S 5791) was introduced in June 2009 by Assemblyman Sheldon Silver and Senator Diane Savino, along with several colleagues. The bill would expand New York's existing Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) program to include paid family leave.

For more information about the advocacy campaign, visit the New York Time to Care website at www.timetocareny.org or the Center for Working Families website at www.centerforworkingfamilies.info.

Oregon

Senator Diane Rosenbaum, along with several colleagues, introduced SB 966, a paid leave insurance bill. The legislation would establish a family insurance program to provide up to six weeks of paid leave to care for a new infant or newly adopted child, or for a family member with a serious health condition. Benefits would equal \$300 per week. The bill would cover all employers already covered by the Oregon Family Leave Act, Oregon's state-level version of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, which provides job-protected unpaid leave and applies to employers with 25 or more employees.

For more information about the advocacy campaign, visit the Children First for Oregon website at www.cffo.org or the website of Parents for Paid Leave at www.parentsforpaidleave.org.

Washington State

Washington State passed its existing paid parental leave insurance program in 2007 but did not establish a funding mechanism. Now, the state is working to identify funding to launch the program. This year, the legislature considered a bill that would establish an employee-paid payroll premium system to sustain the program; they also considered legislation that would expand the coverage of the program beyond paid parental leave. However, due to a state budget shortfall, advocates are looking ahead to next year to move the legislation.

For more information about the advocacy campaign, visit the Economic Opportunity Institute's website at www.eoionline.org.