

New Polling Confirms Strong, Broad Support for Paid Family and Medical Leave

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The FAMILY Act, a comprehensive paid family medical leave proposal, continues to win high levels of support, even after voters hear about costs.

Just-released polling finds that 75 percent of voters would support a national paid family and medical leave policy that covers all workers.¹ These findings reinforce past polling that demonstrates an overwhelming majority of Americans support national paid leave.

Widespread support across demographic groups.

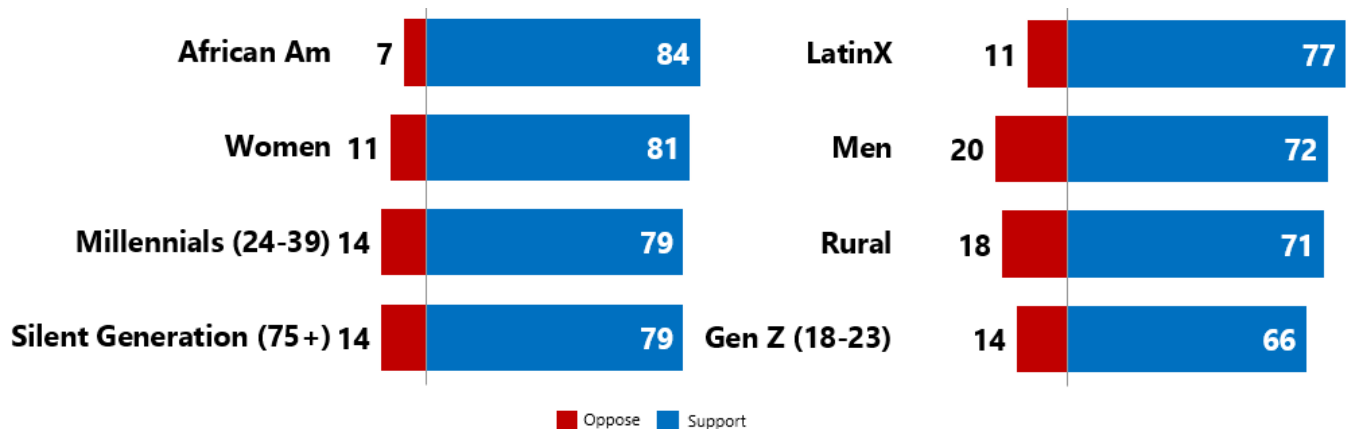
There was high support across demographic groups, even after hearing details about the FAMILY Act, including that it would be financed through a payroll contribution from workers and employers.²

Support for FAMILY Act:

- 75% of voters are supportive
- 76% support after introducing the small payroll contribution from workers and employers

High levels of support across party lines:

- 87% among Democrats
- 71% among Independents
- 70% among Republicans
- 78% among Moderate Republicans



Voters support the FAMILY Act because it is comprehensive and pro-business.

The most effective message frames show the broader benefits to society that a paid leave program provides. Voters want to know that everyone—their loved ones, employers and the economy—will benefit from this legislation.

Most Effective Message Frames:

○ 90 percent of voters support the FAMILY Act when they hear that people need paid leave to take time off work to care for a seriously sick family member. It is particularly effective for strong liberals and Democrats.

- The Message: “Workers should be able to take paid time off to care for themselves or a seriously sick family member, in addition to a new child. In fact, 55% of workers who take leave from work do so for medical reasons, and 1 in 5 workers between 45 and 64 report being a caregiver to an aging parent. Without paid leave, family caregivers may not be able to take the dedicated time needed to care for a loved one.”

○ 89 percent of voters support the FAMILY Act when they hear that paid leave is good for businesses. While this is an effective message for all voters, it is the strongest message for moderate and conservative Republicans and men.

- The Message: “The FAMILY Act would establish a fund so businesses of all sizes can provide affordable paid leave to their workers. Business leaders say allowing workers to care for themselves and their families helps attract talent, increases employee morale, and helps keep employers from losing valued employees. In fact, four times as many workers leave their jobs when paid leave is not provided, creating high turnover costs for employers.”

Additional messages voters support:

○ “The lack of access to paid leave comes at a high cost to U.S. workers. On average, workers age 50 or older who leave the workforce to care for a parent lose more than \$300,000 in wages and retirement benefits. Overall U.S. workers lose more than \$22 billion in wages each year to take unpaid leave from work. A federal paid leave program would help workers keep their jobs and be more financially stable.”

○ “Only 19% of all U.S. workers receive paid family leave through an employer, forcing many people who don’t have leave to decide between earning a paycheck and taking time off to care for a new child, a sick loved one, or themselves.”

○ “The U.S. is out of step by not providing workers access to paid family and medical leave to care for a new child, a seriously ill family member, or themselves. We are one of the only countries in the world that does not nationally

guarantee working people any form of paid leave from work, and eight states plus the District of Columbia have already enacted successful policies providing workers paid family and medical leave.”

About the poll

This poll was conducted among 2,000 U.S. voters between March 7-8, 2020. The survey fielded at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak when the U.S. was just starting to see an increase in canceled events, school closings and work restrictions.

¹ Do you support or oppose a national paid family and medical leave policy that would cover all people who are working?

² As you may know, a bill that would allow workers to take paid family and medical leave is currently being considered by the U.S. Congress. The Family And Medical Insurance Leave Act would help employers provide paid leave by creating a fund, which will be paid for by small weekly contributions shared equally between workers and employers. The proposal, which is commonly called the FAMILY Act, would allow all working people to take 12 weeks of partially paid time off from their jobs to take care of a new child, a seriously ill family member, or address their own serious medical issue. From what you know, do you support or oppose Congress passing the FAMILY Act?

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 all people meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at NationalPartnership.org.

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