

Independent Women's Voice[®]
The Paid Leave Debate



What's at Stake

We all want American families to have the time and resources they need to welcome a new child.

Bad Solution:

A new federal entitlement program would:

- Require a new payroll tax,
- Disrupt existing paid leave arrangements,
- Leave all workers with less money in their paychecks,
- Result in fewer job opportunities, particularly for women.

In reality most full-time employees have some paid time off. But this doesn't mean all families have the time and resources they need when welcoming a child. Those who lack paid leave often end up leaving their jobs and using public assistance.

A Better Path Forward: Earned Leave

- Budget neutral and gender neutral
- Does not raise taxes or expand government
- Completely voluntary, doesn't affect others

Qualifying workers can opt to receive benefit payments following the birth or adoption of a child. Workers' retirement benefits would then be delayed or they could pay additional taxes to offset the earned leave benefits' costs.

How This Helps:

All workers decide for themselves when they need benefits most, **benefits they've earned.**

Expands access to leave for those who are most vulnerable today (low-skill, low-wage workers). Family leave is critical because it:

- Is associated with better health for mothers and babies.
- Encourages greater involvement of fathers.
- Encourages workers to return to work rather than leaving work force for government aid.

This is fair to workers who do not want and will not use earned leave benefits. They will not have to pay for someone else's benefits. Employers would still have an incentive to offer employees paid leave benefits. Instead of making government bigger, this makes it work better.

Addressing Misperceptions

MISPERCEPTIONS	FACTS
<p>This plan forces workers to choose between family leave and retirement.</p>	<p>This plan offers a choice where today workers have no choice. All programs and approaches involve tradeoffs. The proposed federal paid leave program would not offer choice but would require everyone to pay new taxes.</p>
<p>The government should stay out of paid leave entirely.</p>	<p>The government already ends up using taxpayer dollars to help those who lack leave, through other programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid and unemployment insurance. This plan would simply give people better options so they can use government benefits that already exist—benefits they’ve earned.</p>
<p>Social Security isn’t financially stable and can’t afford to provide this new benefit.</p>	<p>Social Security does face a fiscal imbalance that policymakers need to address; however, this approach won’t impact Social Security’s finances overall since payments made today are offset in the future.</p>