



Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus

*Learning, connecting, and problem-solving
together. Our children are counting on us.*

***Paid Family and Medical Leave Would Benefit All Ohioans & their Children
November 15, 2021***

Welcome!

*Opening comments from our caucus co-chair,
Senator Stephanie Kunze*



Kate McCleese,

Senior Campaign Manager,

PL+US: Paid Leave for the United States

P L + U S



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The Women's Public Policy Network

The need for state-level action on paid leave to address racial, gender, and economic disparities

www.womenspublicpolicynetwork.org



Why paid family and medical leave matters for Ohio's economy

- Evidence from other state-based systems demonstrated that access to paid family and medical leave
 - Promotes economic stability and workforce participation for parents and caregivers
 - Improves retention and reduces turnover
- Women make up nearly half of Ohio's labor force (48 percent) and more than one-quarter of its business owners (28 percent).
- Access to paid leave improves families' overall stability and financial security, which has a positive economic impact



Why paid family and medical leave matters for Ohio's families

- More than 134,300 children are born in Ohio each year, and in 72 percent of all Ohio households with children – nearly 1.8 million homes – all parents have paying jobs.
- In the next 20 years, the share of the state's population age 65 and older will grow by one-seventh. Older workers are more likely to experience serious medical conditions that require care.
- Women's wages support their households. In Ohio, 55 percent of mothers are key family breadwinners.
- Across the country, many men want to play a larger role in caring for their families, but unsupportive policies and stigma hold them back.



The need for state action

- Despite the evidence of clear benefit, very few working people in the U.S. have paid family leave through their jobs: 20 percent of works overall, and just 8 percent of low-wage workers.
- In Ohio, even unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act is inaccessible for *61 percent* of working people.
- Action at the state level is needed to ensure every working Ohioan has access, particularly **women, workers of color, and low-income workers who have been left behind**

History of action from state champions

- Last three Ohio General Assemblies, state lawmakers (led by Rep. Kuhns the first session, then led by Rep. Boyd) proposed legislation to create a statewide paid family and medical leave program
- Under Rep. Boyd and Rep. Boggs' leadership, paid leave bill received proponent hearing last session
- Rep. Boyd has continued her advocacy and leadership on the issue of paid leave with efforts to bring back legislation this session





A comprehensive, bold policy

- A paid family and medical leave policy should do more than provide pay for existing FMLA. It should follow these evidence-based principles:
 - Include comprehensive coverage of leave: **parental, caregiving, and personal medical**
 - Cover all employers, **regardless of size, sector, or classification of worker** (including part time and contract workers)
 - Provide **adequate wage replacement** for all leave circumstances
 - Adopt an **inclusive definition** of an individual who is covered by caregiving leave
 - Provide adequate leave time of **at least 12-weeks**
 - Guarantee **job-protection, anti-retaliation, and anti-discrimination** protections



State-level program structure

- State level bills modeled as social insurance model, **funded entirely by employees** through premiums deducted from employees' wages
- **Businesses will not bear the financial costs** of funding the program
- Employers currently offering paid leave policies that are employer-funded or a combination of employer- and employee-funded would be able to alleviate the financial costs of providing a policy themselves



State-level program structure

- An actuarial evaluation will determine: (1) the premium costs and (2) the administrative and technology costs of developing and operating a program
- There are immense cost savings over the long-term for our state, for businesses, and for individuals by enacting paid leave - **there is a cost to doing nothing**
- Previous Ohio bills were based on Colorado legislation, which provides some estimates for financial impact on workers and the state:
 - Estimates the total cost to an employee would be approximately \$25 to \$30 per year
 - Estimates that the cost of running an actuarial evaluation and establishing the program would be approximately \$400,000
 - The state may apply for and accept gifts, grants, donations, and additional federal funding to supplement the costs of running the program



The time is now

- Opportunity to build off of momentum from national efforts, **where workers and business owners have expressed support of the issue**, to deliver on a statewide paid leave policy
- Enacting a state paid leave program would help foster a state with **healthy children and families**
- It is an important tool to help Ohio's economy rebuild from the COVID-19 crisis and to keep workers, especially women, in the workforce

Heather Whaling,

Founder and President,

Geben Communication



Questions & Answers

Moderated by our caucus co-vice chair, Rep. Susan Manchester

For legislators and legislative staff, please feel free to unmute yourselves to ask questions or share feedback.

For all other participants, please use the chat feature.

Thank you for joining today's webinar!



For more information on upcoming Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus webinars and meetings, please contact Alison Paxson at apaxson@childrensdefense.org