Federal Priorities for Work & Family Policy

The Work and Family Agenda

A new baby, a bout of flu, or a cancer diagnosis too often leads to a family crisis. Forcing workers to choose between their job and their health, or that of a loved one, is bad for our communities and bad for our economy.

The Work and Family Agenda assures that every job is an economy-boosting job. Our families, communities, and economy will be stronger when working people can maintain financial stability while protecting their own health and caring for their loved ones.

State Paid Leave Fund
The State Paid Leave Fund has been proposed by President Obama to provide grants to states to develop paid family leave programs like Washington’s FMLI. The Senate Appropriations Committee recently approved $5 million for the Fund, but the FY 2014 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations bill still needs to be approved by the full Senate and the House of Representatives.

Healthy Families Act
The federal Paid Sick Days bill would extend sick and safe leave protections nationally. All workers in companies of 15 or more would be able to earn 7 days of leave annually. S 631 is sponsored by Senator Tom Harkin and has 19 cosponsors, including Senator Patty Murray. HR 1286 is sponsored by Rosa DeLauro and has 117 cosponsors, including Representative Rick Larsen and Representative Jim McDermott.

Family Act
Expected to be introduced in early fall 2013 by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and Representative Rosa DeLauro, the Family Act would establish a federal family and medical leave insurance program similar to Washington state’s proposed policy: up to 12 weeks of leave with 2/3 of pay, funded through payroll premiums shared by workers and employers.